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MUNDI ET CORDIS

CARMINA.

LE
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George Paston, Esq. -
With the Author's regards.

MUNDI ET CORDIS:

DE REBUS

SEMPITERNIS ET TEMPORARIIS:

CARMINA.

POEMS AND SONNETS.

By THOMAS WADE.

" Ed è sì spento ogni benigno lume
" Del Ciel, per cui s'informa umana vita,
" Che per cosa mirabile s'addita
" Chi vuol far d'Elicona nascer fiume ?"

PETRARCH: *Seventh Sonnet.*

3782 54
5.4.40

LONDON:

JOHN MILLER, HENRIETTA-STREET,

COVENT-GARDEN.

M DCCC XXXV.

LONDON:

PRINTED BY T. C. SAVILL (LATE HARJETTE AND SAVILL)

107, ST. MARTIN'S LANE.

TO

BARRY CORNWALL, ESQ.,

THIS VOLUME

IS

INSCRIBED,

BY

HIS OBLIGED AND OBEDIENT

FRIEND AND SERVANT,

THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

In publishing this volume, its Author has not even the happiness of hope. "In these times," he has but too much reason to fear that it can receive only a slight attention even from those whose approbation he most covets, and for which he would willingly do homage. Men intensely engaged in a tumultuous and engrossing strife, are not wont to take more than casual heed of the small bird singing high over their heads, or of the minute flower throwing forth its perfumes at their feet.

In a brief and momentarily-uncertain life, however, he who, of the many a thousand verses which he may, imperceptibly, have written, shall be "fond" enough to deem that there may happily be some few, or even but a solitary ONE, that may embalm his name into an endurance beyond

that which is the ordinary privilege of dust, does ill to defer to auspicious opportunity his humble pretensions to remembrance; and thus incur the risk of being belated in that night in which "no man can work."

Of the following Brevities, many have already been seen in places where the honourable reception which they have severally received is their Author's best assurance that they are not altogether unworthy of appearing in their present collected form. The greater portion of them, however, and of the Sonnets more especially, are now for the first time submitted to the Public.

Bearsted Green;
March, 1835.

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MUNDI TEMPLUM.

POEMS AND SONNETS.

POEMS.

I.

TO POESY.

1.

Thou "Wine of Demons!" by dull Flesh abjured,
But the true Essence of all things divine!
The Incense that perfumeth Nature's shrine!
Nectar of the heart and brain!
Spirit's sun-unfolding Rain!
Deep Poesy! I come to thee, allured
By all that I do hear, scent, touch, or see;
From the flower's delicate aglet, where the bee
Makes music; to the depths of sea and ether,
Where winds and waves in fierce love leap together,
And storms are thunder-voiced and lightning-plumed,
And worlds, Creation's sparks, extinguish'd and illumed!

2.

The mysteries which the Dreamers of old days
Did gird thee with, in many a solemn strain,
Are buried in the grave of our disdain:
Men now no altars to Apollo raise;

And rich-brain'd Memory's glorious Daughters
Sink in Oblivion's Lethe-waters:
The Mount whence Eros shot his golden arrow
At jeering Phœbus' heart, revered by none,
Hath less advertence than a war-left barrow,
And every spring mates that of Helicon:
The blood-engender'd Horse, the winged vision!
With the child's steed becomes the man's derision;
Round poet-brows no laurel crownlet clings,
And outward symbols all are scoff'd as idle things!

3.

But life and death remain unread;
And by the same
Aspiring flame
Their poor inheritors are fed:
And thou and thy sublime rewards,
Deep-dwelling in the mind's regards,
Unchanged, are now as when dark Sappho writ,
Or Carus' wisdom on the world alit.

4.

Some idle voices are gone forth of late,
That thou art fading from the dreamless world;
But darkness cannot yet decree light's date,
Nor thine imperial flag by slaves be furl'd!

From many a stately and electric pen
Thou still shalt rule and lighten amid men,
Blinding their common being
To teach diviner seeing!
Thou art immortal!
The lurid portal
Which openeth at life's last declivity
Is not for thee;
For thou wilt hold thine high festivity
Of grief and glee
Till mind with matter shall no longer mingle,
And crush'd be every world where breathing soul doth tingle!

5.

Deep Cell of Honey! evermore unclosed,
But filling fast as feasted on: thou Flower!
That on the steep of Life aye overpeerest
The ocean of Eternity, and rearest
Thy beauteous head beneath Time's hurricane power,
In which, though shaken, thou hast still reposed:
Even as a green bough waveth o'er a tomb,
Thy glories float above the old world's doom;
And as sweet blossoms beat to earth by rain
Rise with fresh beauty in the morning sun—
When Barbarism hath thy grace o'errun,

Thou with a most tender
And more perfect splendour
Hast blush'd reviving o'er the world again!

6.

Words, the keen instruments of Mind and Thought,
Are but the semblance which thou deign'st to wear
To make thy godhead visible to sense:
Then, on thy wings and in thy gaze intense
To Heaven by a divine assumption caught,
We mount amid the Soul's ascending thunder;
Sublimer spirits for awhile appear,
And spurn this clay-work with disdaining wonder!
Deep-mirror'd, in the ocean of the Mind
Thy heavens are in reflected glory kindled;
Till, like a Typhon, thunder-struck and blind,
We fall, in darkness crush'd—helpless, and dwindled
Into our insect-cells again! but thou
Dost comfort us with balm:
A holy calm
Falls on our woe;
We bathe in thy sweet waters of delight,
And, so refresh'd, into our mortal night
Droop cheerful as the pinky daisy's eye,
That closeth in the twilight quietly.

7.

As many wander by the wondrous Ocean
Only to gather pebbles, thou to millions
Art but as vanity; but that emotion
Which of the hearts who feast in thy pavilions
Is the ripe-gushing fruit and foaming wine,
Is deep as Bacchus' vat, or Mammon's mine!
Those who despise thee and thy dreamy glories,
Because they know thee not, are dreamers vainer,
Who sleep through their dark life, and think it light;
Reality their spell-word: but thy sight
Out-glanceth dull day-life; thy lofty stories
Are clear as their fond creeds, and thy religion plainer.

8.

Oh! be thou with my dense soul interfused!
That it may float in buoyant gladness
Upon thy stream of sober madness
Over the grave, within itself bemused:
When I am dead, be thou my cenotaph!
As shakes the shingle-foam beneath the wind,
I quiver at thy breath, which whirls the chaff
From out the stored garners of the mind:
Thou dost anneal the spirit, till each hue
O' the outward Universe doth pierce it through

And there live colour'd in resemblance rife!
Thy lightning flashes from the clouds of life!
As the eye, eastward fix'd afar,
Plucks from the dawn a paling star,
Seen but by a striving vision;
Thou, with a sublime decision,
Forcest from the Universe
Many a dream and secret golden,
In its depths of glory folden,
And weav'st it into soul-essential Verse!
Like the storm-presaging bird
In the van of thunder heard,
Thou prophesiest of Eternity;
And from the great To-Come clouds roll before thine eye!

9.

Like the Mæander's, thy sweet streams return,
From their diverse and mazy wandering,
To their bright fountain-urn;
And to the spirit bring
Tidings of a diviner blossoming,
In meadows far away of endless Spring.
Nature's most common page with thee is fraught;
Thy flowers expand around us, dew'd and sunny—
But the wing'd hearts by whom thy balm is sought
Are few, and fewer those that find the honey

Which sleepeth in the depths of thy perfume:
Bees amass sweetness from the lowliest flower;
But vulgar insects o'er a world of bloom
Flit, and reveal no nectar-hiving power.

10.

Thy mighty elements, in peace prepared
In the creative chaos of the soul,
Are blent in fury; and that storm is shared
By all who walk within thy sky's control:
But between them that in thy tempests pant
And thee, is seal'd a rainbow-covenant!
As in the banner'd gloom the dusk Night reareth
The solitary sea-bird disappeareth,
Thou fadest in the depths of our despair;
But Hope's bright dreams arise,
With future-wooing eyes—
And, lo! thy re-apparent wings burn in the visible air!

11.

The theme that's inexhaustible must cease
All unaccomplish'd, or for ever flow:
I dedicate my transient being
To thy great altars, thou All-seeing!
Lead me in tumult to thy sovereign peace;
And print thy kiss of love on my soul's brow!

Suffer my footsteps in thy Places Holy ;
And sanctify me with the melancholy
Born of that exaltation !—Lo ! I droop ;
And from thine ether to dim silence stoop—
Yet musing of thee : as the lark, descending,
Stills in the lower airs his gushing song ;
And on the quiet mead his voyage ending,
Sits hush'd, as his deep thought did the same strain prolong.

II.

PHOSPHOR AND HESPER.

PHOSPHOR.

In a flood of ether I swim, I swim!
My argent lamp dewily burning;
But, Sister! thy splendour is dim, is dim!
As an eye to the grave returning—
Why is thy beauty mourning?

HESPER.

I am weary and sick with dreams,
White Son of the Waking Morn!
For since the sun set in these western streams
I have slept in the midst of my golden beams,
The pillow of air adorning;
And visions of time and space and heaven
The life in my heart have lulled, or riven;
And now I sink
On night's dim brink,
Like a soul to the grave, that is unforgiven—
Forlorn! forlorn! forlorn!—
Art thou my sadness scorning?

PHOSPHOR.

The starry curtain of the dawn
Hath my silver hand withdrawn,
Orb of evening splendid!
My joy hath not birth from thy sadness;
But the sun hath endow'd me with gladness:
From the crystal height of my eastern throne
I behold him ascending alone, alone!
Into heaven, with eye distended—
Like a thought of God in the poet's soul!
His herald-cloud is above me, tinted
With the light his purple kiss imprinted:
Its foldings pallid in dew unrol,
Which the lark, on my lustre calling,
Imbibes in its balmy falling:
I hear the star beneath me sighing
With the burning love on his pale heart lying—
Art thou, too, dying?

HESPER.

I seek my tomb
In the purpled verge of the night-cloud's gloom:
Like hope from the heart, I sink from heaven.
Our queen is tranced in a ghostly swoon;

Red-banner'd Mars faints by the fainting moon,
And the constellations around are driven
Into the depths of the brightening dawn—
Like dews by the sphere of a flower absorb'd,
Or starting tears in the eye withdrawn!
Only thou art radiant-orb'd:
The morn o'ermantles the earth and sea—
Farewell! they need not me:
O'er the gulf of night am I clouded!

PHOSPHOR.

Farewell! I am failing like joy
Which its own sweet excess doth cloy—
Farewell! in light I am shrouded!

III.

THE COMING OF NIGHT.

Night in the east, like to a shrouded nun,
Comes pacing, slow and melancholy, forth,
With all her mystical austerity,
Dark'ning the hills and billows; but the west
Still holds fair Day, who, like a dying saint,
Gleams with a holy joy in her last hour,
Mantled in gold and azure; and two stars
That on her lessening boundary hang in light,
Seem angels minist'ring to her last breath
Some heavenly consolation. Like death on life,
The pall of Night spreads ever on the track
Of fading Daylight, till the west, as east,
Is darkness. Lo! the stars, Day's funeral lamps,
Hang thick and clustering in the vault of Heaven,
Mirror'd along the ocean, which peals forth
A requiem to the sun; whilst those two orbs
That leant above the death-bed of the Day
Set, as in righteous sorrow, leaving Night
To all the wide inheritance of Heaven.
She wears her milky girdle o'er her robe

Starrily spangled ; and upon the cliffs
And complication of the circling hills,
The wave-swept shore, and all the amplitude
Of air and sea, broodeth in starry vastness.

IV.

DAWN.

I BREAK upon the skylark's starry sleep:
Lo! up to the unclouded vault he springs,
As a quick thought into the brain doth leap,
And to the cresting star of morning sings
A faint and trembling song; again descending,
And with the interrupted silence blending.
The pale Dawn dreams amid the broken shadows
Of sky and air, of ocean, cliffs and meadows,
Like love, with eyes half-ope, through scatter'd hair:
The morning star swings high its silver lamp
O'er the white portal of the ethereal east;
And beaming upon Vesper, dim and damp
In the pale purple of the western air,
Lights her to sleep in the o'ercurtain'd night,
Fast fading from the banner of the morning
In the advancing van of its adorning.
The fixed star-spheres, from their watch released,
Retire within a veil of blinding light;
And, riding on Aurora's opening lid,
Seem but dream-tears within its lashes hid.

As the morn wakes upon her starlight pillow,
The moonbeam pales upon the tranquil billow,
And, like a radiant ghost, slow dies away
In the grey splendour of the kindling day.
In a dim vapour, on the horizon's verge,
Now setteth Hesper faint and weepingly;
And from the caves of night a murky surge,
Advancing to the forehead of the sky,
Enfolds in heaving clouds the day-star clear;
And the cleft orb of the way-weary moon
And one far pilgrim planet's failing sphere
Alone in the dissolving ether swoon.

V.

THE FROZEN COAST.

1829, 1830.

1.

The winter-wild Seas have laid bare the shore,
And shingle and sand from its stony floor
Swept, and left naked a desert of rocks
That was buried in pebbly depths before;
And the spray of the waves on their massy blocks—
Of a thousand uncouth and fantastic forms,
The offspring misshapen of billows and storms—
Lies frozen, and white as an old man's hair:
Some are huddled and clad, others lonely and bare;
And from the weeds on the adamant crowd,
Thick, wither'd and starch'd,
By the keen winds parch'd,
The icicles hang their white frost-woven locks,
Which shell-fish and creatures scarce animate shroud.
Where the waves have receded that blent with the rills
Which flow'd o'er the beach to the sea from the hills

And kiss'd them with freshness, of shingle-pierced ice
Lie glittering curves; and the unmoving snow
Streaks the cliffs above and the beach below
And enwreathes the far hills with a varied device;
And smooth frozen sea-weeds are scatter'd around,
Which, suddenly struck, gleam with stars at the wound.

2.

A river, the far-pour'd oblation
Of mountain-streamings, in their congregation,
Beneath a veil of ice transparent,
Through which its crystal clear apparent
Gleams like love through chastity,
Flows along the dreary sand;
Till, breaking from its icy shade,
'Twixt ice-banks, from its waters made,
It trickles coldly to the sea
That foams upon the frozen strand.

3.

On the vast cliffs that heavenward climb,
Which on their brows wear storm-recorded Time,
The frost hath wrought a work sublime!
The manifold descending fountains
Of these cleft and concave mountains

Are veil'd within their icy cells,
Portculliced by vast icicles,
That, dagger-like, in each rocky jag,
Hang threat'ningly from crag to crag;
And where'er a curving roof
Beetles far into the air,
There is woven a glorious woof
Of ice-threads o'er the ceiling bare;
Whilst broader streamlets here and there
From the cliff's summit to its base
Lie bright and still in frozen ripples,
Where the faint sunbeams, coldly nurst,
Draw slow drops from those icy nipples,
Which, chain'd by the frost in their downward chase,
Seem struggling in vain to leap forth as at first—
A charm on my eyes hath burst!
A waterfall bold,
In many a fold
From steep to steep wide sweeping,
Till, perpendicularly leaping,
It sprang to the rocky beach,
In vain hath strived to reach—
For the frozen airs, around it creeping,
In massy ice-bonds clasp it, sleeping,
And there it lives, unheard, but dread,
Like a mighty spirit dead!

VI.

THE WINTER SHORE.

JANUARY, 1830.

A MIGHTY change it is, and ominous
Of mightier, sleeping in Eternity.
The bare cliffs seem half-sinking in the sand,
Heaved high by winter seas; and their white crowns,
Struck by the whirlwinds, shed their hair-like snow
Upon the desolate air. Sullen and black,
Their huge backs rearing far along the waves,
The rocks lie barrenly, which there have lain,
Reveal'd, or hidden, from immemorial time;
And o'er them hangs a sea-weed drapery,
Like some old Triton's hair, beneath which lurk
Myriads of crowned shell-fish, things whose life,
Like a cell'd hermit's, seemeth profitless.
Vast slimy masses harden'd into stone
Rise smoothly from the surface of the Deep,
Each with a hundred thousand fairy cells
Perforate, like a honeycomb, and, cup-like,
Fill'd with the sea's salt crystal—the soft beds

Once of so many pebbles, thence divorced
By the continual waters, as they grew
Slowly to rock. The bleak shore is o'erspread
With sea-weeds green and sere, curl'd and dishevell'd,
As they were mermaids' tresses, wildly torn
For some sea-sorrow. The small mountain-stream,
Swoln to a river, laves the quivering beach,
And flows in many channels to the sea
Between high shingly banks, that shake for ever.
The solitary sea-bird, like a spirit,
Balanced in air upon his crescent wings,
Hangs floating in the winds, as he were lord
Of the drear vastness round him, and alone
Natured for such dominion. Spring and Summer
And stored Autumn, of their liveries
Here is no vestige: Winter, tempest-robed,
In gloomy grandeur o'er the hills and seas
Reigneth omnipotent.

VII.

"SOLVITUR ACRIS HYEMS."

1.

The Winter's fled;
He's charm'd away:
The Earth, that dead
And frozen lay
But yesterday,
Hath burst her grave:
The glorious wave
Foams richly in the Sun:
The Winter's reign is done!

2.

The sea-birds lave their wings
For joy in the bright ocean;
The hill-descended springs
Resume their bounding motion;
The ice and snow have vanish'd;
The freezing winds are banish'd;
And the mild airs come
To their sunny home;

And along the mountainous earth
Its green robe starts to birth;
And by joyous thousands forth
The glad birds chirping roam!

3.

Toward us the infant Spring
Is on her cherub wing;
And on the sea and land
The hearts of men expand,
And open to the God
Who o'er their drear abode
Doth breathe this renovating spirit,
Which skies and air and earth and all that live inherit!

VIII.

"GOLDEN CAP."*

1st FEBRUARY, 1830.

1.

I TREAD the bare crown of this regal hill,
And gaze around:
The frost hath hung rich jewels by the rill,
And o'er the fall
Of every brook and fountain small;
Along the ground
The vestal snow is warmly spread,
Kiss'd by the blaze of glory overhead.

2.

The smooth wave curves up
On the shelving shore,
Till the mighty cup
Seems brimming o'er!
The blue sea from the azure-palaced sun
A golden zone of rippling fire hath won,

* Dorsetshire.

Through which a skiff is flying,
And earthly meteor, vying
With one of heaven:
The clouds in heaven as heaven are clear,
And in the horizon doth appear,
Of texture even,
A silvery mist, that nothing veils
The glory of the atmosphere—
Yet the light-feather'd snow is flying on the gales!

3.

Pale, in the pale blue sky,
High o'er the snow-robed hills,
Hangs the hemisphered moon;
Wan as a maid with maiden ills:
But she shall be no vestal soon;
But on the bed of night, voluptuously
Fill'd with the sun's embrace, rejoicing lie.

4.

The splendour of the Universe is round me:
I am transfix'd;
But my animate soul
Is pervading the whole,
Far intermix'd—
And love, sin, grief, nor death hath power to wound me!

IX.

A NIGHT AMID THE SEA-WARD HILLS.

1.

The brow of Heaven wears
No frown, nor storm-cleft wrinkle;
The fountain's gentle tears
Amid the silence tinkle;
The lake it formeth in the meadow
Is kiss'd by many a trembling shadow
Of flower and blade;
Reflected stars, its depths amid,
Gaze heavenward as with furtive lid,
And by the moon a pyramid
Of light is made.

2.

The water-fowl supine
Crowd close, with hidden bills;
The ruminating kine
Move not upon the hills;
Moths on the warm air dimly flit,
And insects in a slumb'rous fit

Stir all the leaves;
One bird, amid the hazel fluttering,
A sleepy cry of fear is uttering;
And the scarce-audible sea, low-muttering,
A dull sound weaves.

3.

The fishermen's old boats,
Like shore-cast things asleep—
And nets, with shapeless floats,
Lie on the shingle deep:
Amid them, one rough sentinel
Strides as a lynx within his cell,
Still to and fro,
Tracking a smuggler's veering skiff,
In the dim distance fugitive;
The sere grass stirs upon the cliff,
With motion slow.

4.

The Ocean's foamless lip
Scarce breathes upon the beach;
The Moon and Hesper clip
Its depths with amorous pleach,
Beaming their love from south and west
Over its mutely-panting breast,

In paleness splendid;
And by the gush and crisp retreat
Of its calm swell, their reflex fleet
Is curved from my advancing feet,
Or dim-extended.

5.

The gather'd constellations
The infinite blue bestud,
Whose twinkling coruscations
Cleave its ethereal flood,
And yield the deep pale influence,
Dim-scrutable to striving sense,
Of shade and light:
Murmurs pervade the concave hills,
From echoed sounds and trickling rills;
And over all, the Night distils
A dew-shower bright.

6.

A solitude sublime
Breathes on my breathless heart,
And thoughts of death and time
Into its depths depart:
Immortal dreams above them gushing,
My soul in all my veins is blushing

With love divine—
SPIRIT! from me let not this symbol'd story
Of thine immensity pass transitory;
Let me not lose of thine in-hidden glory
This outward, visible sign!

X.

SYMPATHY.

THERE's music on the earth: the moon and her attendant
Partake the lofty solitude of Heaven.
Why should they seem more lovely to the sight
For that low melody? By the sweet strain,
Which falls upon the soul and melts the soul,
'Tis temper'd to their beauty: 'tis the mind
Which lends the happier influence it receives
From things external, and takes back its own
Even as a boon. A sympathy is on me:
I deem those fair lights mortal; there's a death
Looks through their glory: feeling they may perish,
I love them more; and my mortality
Shakes off its grosser weight, self-reconciled
By such high partnership.

XI.

NYMPHS.

1.

Beautiful Things of Old! why are ye gone for ever
Out of the earth? Oh! why?
Dryad and Oread, and ye, Nereids blue!
Whose presence woods and hills and sea-rocks knew—
Ye've pass'd from Faith's dim eye,
And, save by poet's lip, your names are honour'd never.

2.

The sun on the calm sea sheddeth a golden glory,
The rippling waves break whitely,
The sands are level and the shingle bright,
The green cliffs wear the pomp of Heaven's light,
And sea-weeds idle lightly
Over the rocks; but ye appear not, Dreams of Story!

3.

Nymphs of the Sea! Faith's heart hath fled from ye, hath fled;
Ye are her boasted scorn;

Save to the poet's soul, the sculptor's thought,
The painter's fancy, ye are now as nought:
Mute is old Triton's horn,
And with it half the voice of the Old World is dead.

4.

Our creeds are not less vain; our sleeping life still dreams;
The present, like the past,
Passes in joy and sorrow, love and shame;
Truth dwells as deep; wisdom is yet a name;
Life still to death flies fast,
And the same shrouded light from the dark future gleams.

5.

Spirits of vale and hill, of river and of ocean—
Ye thousand deities!
Over the earth be president again;
And dance upon the mountain and the main,
In view of mortal eyes:
Love us, and be beloved, with the Old Time's devotion!

XII.

TO A WATER-DROP.

1.

Atom of the sustaining element
Which of the old earth is the sap and blood,
That dwell'st apart
From that vast heart
Of which thou art one life-drop, to the mood
Of thought thy narrow sphere lends spacious argument!

2.

This is thy voice:—"I am the globed dew
Which trickles from the locks of twilight grey,
When the earth falls asleep, and when anew
She wakens, blushing with a dream of day,
And the love-stricken star of the pale morning
Swoons in Aurora's eyelids; till the grass,
Foliage and flowers are pearl'd with my adorning,
And not a leaf but drinks me as I pass.

3.

" I am the tears that gush from human eyes,
Even figured as themselves and glassy-sphered—
A sweeter dew let fall from clearer skies;
And on the flower o' the cheek I hang endear'd:
I am the eyes, with air and fire enwove,
In triple glory; and I am the light
Which moistly lies upon the lips of love,
When love to liquid kisses they invite.

4.

" I am the rain which clouded heaven weepeth;
In the rebounding hail I dance congeal'd;
In the still snow which, mute as shadows, sweepeth
Over the earth, I am by warmth revealed;
And in the hoar frost is my gem secreted—
Soft-frozen dew; and from the icicle
I come at the sun's call—on bare bough greeted,
Or far amid the rocks in cavern'd cell.

5.

" I form the clouds and mists: the setting sun
Doth glorify me in the golden west,
The moon in silver cloud and halo dun,
And planets in their circlets of dim mist.

Without me were not the electric fire,
Thunder, wind, meteor, nor bright exhalation;
And through me the ethereal beams transpire
Which weave the rainbow's sevenfold coruscation.

6.

" I form the secret springs that feed the earth—
The gushing brook, swift rill and leaping fountain,
River and lake and waterfall; and mirth
Bounds with my music adown many a mountain;
And when the Winter with his cold hand chains
The fluent freedom which in me abided,
Ye may behold me fix'd in crystal plains—
And o'er me glide, swiftly as I have glided.

7.

" I am the seed whence grew the unfathom'd ocean,
Boundless, and crested with a foaming glory!
I form the billows whose eternal motion
Shakes the strong rock and fells the mountain hoary:
Without me the wide earth were desolate,
Its sweets corruption and its verdure sere;
And splendour waits upon my flowing state,
Or in the curving wave, or orbed tear!"

8.

Atom of the earth-filling element!
I cast thee now into thy kindred sea:
Lo! thou art mingled—
As spirit singled
From Nature's soul, awhile in us to be,
Is given to the Great Vast, and with its Depths reblent.

XIII.

TO A NEW-FALLEN LAMB.

1.

Awearied with thy struggle into light,
Thou liest exhausted on the dewy grass;
Whilst o'er thee stands thy dam, in bold affright
At every footstep which doth near thee pass:
Pain, fear and joy and love are in her eyes,
And all a living heart's pure mysteries.

2.

But thou, unconscious and regardless lying
On the damp sod; too new inhabitant
Of this great scene of quick'ning and of dying
To know or fear or joy; clothed in thy scant
And rugged fleece, which the cold winds of morning
Unpitying strike, dost stir not at her warning.

3.

O, for the power to look into the spirit
Which, as thy senses from without receive
The knowledge of their being, shall inherit
Thine infant brain; and in its foldings weave

The intricate forms and sounds, perfumes and hues,
Which the great Universe must there infuse!

4.

Even in the contemplation of a lamb,
All that is vast and brief, blessing and curse,
In life and life's, drives thought into a flame
Whose bright spires in the blue-domed Universe,
Beyond the spheres, are hidden! Yet are we,
Weak wretch! but things of breath and blood like thee.

5.

Nor do I know that this so boasted air
Of immortality we bear within
Is privilege: thou dost not know despair,
Though ignorant of hope; nor crime, nor sin,
Though with no self-wrought virtue; and no fear,
Although no faith, doth to thy dream appear.

6.

Or come there thoughts of life to that dark brain;
Or thy life's spirit be as senseless water,
Which, all reflecting, yet doth nought contain
Of that reflected; even from birth to slaughter,
But for some hopes and terrors which are mine,
What difference 'twixt my mortal lot and thine?

XIV.

THE COPSE.

TO ALPHONSE DE LAMARTINE.

1.

Nor step, nor speech of human thing is near;
But many-winged creatures, round me flying,
Make the incessant airs one voice appear
From Being's infinite heart! Upon the dying
Trunk of this mossy fruit-tree, old and sere,
And half-uprooted, toward the green slope lying,
Will I recline; and fold me in a trance
Of meditation with the bard of France.

2.

Away! thou art too wild for this calm dell;
Anon, I'll ponder with thee by the foam.
A bridal music, not a burial knell,
Must echo here: within this leafy dome
Soft-gushing melodies high o'er me swell
From two enamour'd birds, to shadow come
To bless each other with a summer song,
Whilst yet the earth is green and daylight long.

3.

O, god Apollo! there be million pleasures
Which thine eternal lyre can ne'er express
That warble in these winged poets' measures,
Full flowing from their little hearts' excess!
I know not what may be the rhymed treasures
That have been lost in old Time's wilderness;
But well I weet that never human lips
Breath'd love to love with sweeter soul-eclipse!

4.

They chant, till their own exquisite melodies
Extrance them into silence, and they flit
Mutely among the leaves: the gleaming flies,
Whose wings are rainbows, as with ether lit,
Around me wheel with stirring harmonies
That ne'er from dawn to twilight intermit;
And deep in yon green cave a veiled stream
Murmurs like thoughts of Heaven in a dream.

5.

Alphonse de Lamartine! Come hither, hither—
Furling thy sullen spirit's eagle pinion,
As mine is furl'd; and let us weave together
A sunny song of panting Love's dominion
Over the Universe! let us wear ether
Unclouded in our hearts, leaving the minion

Of common life to strive with common sorrow,
And with our lyres assert the joy of Heaven's morrow!

6.

"I am here! but not rejoicing
With thine idle gladness;
From the music round us voicing
I but gather sadness:
Thou sittest on a tree uprooted,
Which shall no more be leav'd or fruited;
Those minstrel birds, the bird of prey,
Or winter and its want, shall slay;
Those insects are each other's slaughter;
And the sweet music of the water,
Yon emerald cavern's mystic river,
The falling earth strikes dumb for ever."

7.

I would reply; but—hark to that pure strain!—
Those wiser bards sing in the boughs again!

XV.

THE NEST.

In a sun-excluding thicket—
  Laurel, fir, arbutus, rose—
Where the cherup of the cricket
  Rang at night and even-close;
And at early morn and noon
  Piped the chaffinch joyously—
To his mate each song a boon
  Dear as human poesy
Unto human thought—as far
  In its green elysium hidden
As in purple clouds a star,
  In love's heart a wish forbidden—
Hung the litle woven nest
Of some teeming warbler's rest:
Based upon two laurel sprays—
  Emerald moss for its foundation;
Hair, enwreathed in subtle ways,
  And, above, the implication
Of white wool and bosom-feather,
Matted in a round together:

Fibres fine and finer hair
Lined the winged creature's lair ;
Laurels were its tapestry ;
  Roses strew'd their leaves beneath ;
Storms broke o'er it harmlessly ;
  And the summer's perfumed breath
Round it crept in warmth and balm ;
And the morn and even calm,
Gliding its green curtains through,
Hung them all with silver dew !

XVI.

MIND.

1.

What is thy emblem, Mind?

The earth—now wearing on its forehead young
  Unopen'd leaf-buds, and a few pale flowers;
Now with the summer's green and blossom hung,
  And lavishing warm love on all the hours;
Now with its myriad globes of rich ripe fruit,
  And its arboreous leaf-work, million-hued;
Now cold in winter's winding-sheet and mute—
  But its deep heart with brooding life imbued:
    Its early flowers and bursting buds
    Struck by chill winds and cloud-rain'd floods;
    Its summer mantle rent and sodden,
    By all the elements down-trodden;
    Its golden fruit and foliage scatter'd,
    And its dead limbs oppress'd and shatter'd
    By the strong wings of wind and storm,
    And frozen in its heart-depths warm!

2.

What should be thy emblem, Mind?

The weltering ocean,
In calm or commotion—
Now with heaven's own hue
On its bosom blue;
Gentle and slow, with lustrous shadows
Of clouds thin-woven,
By light airs cloven,
And studs of light o'er its azure meadows:
Now dark and still
As intents of ill,
And a mighty mirror
For every terror—
And inly-folded, like resolved will:
Now rolling and foaming
In thunder and fire,
Like the turbulent coming
Of rending desire:
Now vailing to midnight its quivering crest;
Wearing starbeams and moonlight in love on its breast.

3.

What is thy meet emblem, Mind?

The holy beauty of the sky,
Dim shroud of that vast Deity

To whose veil'd ray all rays we see
Are cloud ; with all the spirits that roam
Beneath its ether-woven dome:
The sun, whose space-enfolding flight
Steeps the inebriate earth in light;
The unresting moon, the love-beloved ;
The planets and pale constellations;
The cloud-stars, where the soul, reproved,
Dreams of immensity, and quivers ;
And ever-changing clouds, that flee
Before the wild wind's inspirations,
Like oceans dark and gleaming rivers,
And in tempestuous exhalations
Work change eternal o'er the earth and sea.

4.

As heaven upon the deep descendeth,
God—or whate'er that spirit's name
Whose torch lit up the undying flame
That lampeth in the eyes of space—
Falls on the mind:
As light and wind
Blend on the many-colour'd ocean's face,
So with our common thought that spirit blendeth :

As the sea shakes the earth
With every billow's birth,
The mind with all its strife
Shatters the nerves of life!

XVII.

REALITY.

1.

Reality's slave
From the womb to the grave,
Awake! awake! awake!
Wouldst thou nothing but feed
And sleep at thy need?
Awake! for thy soul's sake.

2.

Art thou not a spirit
Ordain'd to inherit
The universe for ever?
And from birth wilt thou creep
To thy worm-tended sleep,
And from thy clay pass never?

3.

The past, the to-come
Inform and illume
Thy present path, pale sleeper!

But thine apathy dull
Makes thy life-cloud more full,
And thy soul's shadow deeper.

4.

From Reality's trance
Thy spirit advance!
Be dreaming! dreaming! dreaming!
Let thy thought's rapid wave
Far, far o'er the grave
Be streaming! streaming! streaming!

XVIII.

DELIGHTS.

1.

Rock'd on the salt deep
Into a sunny sleep,
And a dream sublime
Of the flow of Time,
Whose billows without number
Bear all things in a slumber
Into Eternity,
As we
Over the glowing sea
Are wafted sleepingly :

2.

Pillow'd, with leaves and stars above us,
Upon hearts that love us ;
Clasp'd and folden
In arms and eyes,
Till from full-cupp'd pleasure's brink
Into a trance we sink,

With visions golden
Peopling the shadow of our ecstasies—
Redeeming sleep from death,
And doubling every joy that perisheth:

3.

Upon an oaken bough
In the fierce wind swinging,
Shouting to earth below,
To the clouds on high
And the birds that round us fly
Rejoicingly,
Words of a clear-tongued poet's singing,
Lofty flights of madness winging:
These are delights divine—
They have been mine.

XIX.

BIRDS AND THOUGHTS.

1.

Oh! I am weary
Of this being dreary:
Sweet birds! Sweet birds!
The winter is around ye;
And ice and snow
Wrap all below;
Above, the air
Is cold, and bare
Each bough,
And the frozen breezes wound ye;
That wherever ye fly,
On the earth, or on high,
Ye find no rest,
Nor food, nor nest,
Sweet birds! Sweet birds!

2.

Oh! I am weary
Of this being dreary:
Sweet birds! Sweet birds!
Our thoughts like ye must ever
In this cold world
With wings half furled
Make voyage bare,
Till by despair
They're whirled
Around, and peace find never;
And, sinking or soaring,
Earth or heaven exploring,
They still must flee
Joyless like ye,
Sweet birds! Sweet birds!

3.

Oh! I am weary
Of this being dreary:
Sweet birds! Sweet birds!
Ye must wait till the spring unfoldeth
The sun and earth;
And then in mirth

Ye may rejoice,
And with clear voice
Her birth
Chant to the sphere which her beauty holdeth :
And our thoughts must await
The great life beyond fate,
To soar and sing,
Like ye in spring,
Sweet birds ! Sweet birds !

XX.

"U S."

1.

For ever, for ever,
The gathering river
Of human life flows on:
We leave but a trace
On the current's face,
And that is lost anon.

2.

Our laughter and tears,
Our hopes and our fears,
Our spirit and our form,
Like mist disappear
Which silent streams wear
In summer-twilight warm.

3.

As a dream in our sleep
Is our life in the deep
Abyss of space and time,
Whose visions most dim and ideal
Of a being resplendent and real
Are record and prophet sublime.

XXI.

OUR LIFE.

1.

As in a shadowy vision
Do we walk the earth,
In this brief transition
Into death, from birth.

2.

We live, or dream—and ponder
On all things around us;
Till the gathering wonder
Deepens to confound us.

3.

In vain we strive to waken,
And to feel that all is real;
By that effort wrung and shaken,
We relapse to the ideal:

4.

Till the sleep of life is past,
And its visions are departed;
And we wake in death, at last,
To a being clearer-hearted.

XXII.

PRESENT AND FUTURE.

1.

As from a gloomy valley,
  O'er which clouds are sweeping,
Which with each other dally,
  And end, like love, in weeping;—
Where wind and rain are beating,
To shelter birds retreating,
  And all things living hush'd;
We gaze on hills afar,
Where sunbeams glowing are,
  And life with light is flush'd:

2.

So from the Present's sorrow,
  Where sighs and tears prevail,
We look toward far to-morrow,
  And the Future's sunlight hail—
Bright as bright hills seen from the valley,
Where the rain and cold winds dally,

And the clouds are canopy,
And unseen one happy bird,
And no insect-cherup heard,
And leaves and flowers weep mournfully.

3.

But when we gain the height
Of time call'd future then,
We find that joyful light
Which there seem'd denizen
Is vanish'd; and the gloom
Which made the earth a tomb
Hath with us been travelling:
As the clouds to hill from valley
With us in our pathway sally
And there in gloom are gathering.

4.

But still on heights beyond, beyond,
The cloud-chased rays are met;
And on we pace, with footsteps fond,
In search of sunshine yet—
Though still the clouds above us
Float onward, to reprove us:

So ever are we cheated
By the Future's flying light;
Till despair whelms all in night—
And the soul drags back, defeated.

XXIII.

THE CURSE OF THOUGHT.

1.

Why, why do I pine,
When the glories divine
Of the sky-painted earth are around me?
Oh! why do I grieve,
When so many hearts weave
About me their meshes of kindness?
Why to me is all vision but blindness?
Oh! why doth the balm
Of retirement and calm
Not heal, as 'tis wont; but still deeplier wound me?

2.

'Tis the demon within,
More of doubt, than of sin,
That racks my gall'd spirit with brooding dismay!
I think on the past—
'Tis gone like the blast,

That dies, but leaves shipwreck and terror behind :
The present is blank as the eye that is blind ;
And the future's a dream
That all shadow doth seem—
A fathomless deep, without haven or bay !

XXIV.

DESPAIR.

The wave-roar of the thunder,
  Beating the shore of heaven;
The piled rocks asunder
  By earthquakes widely riven;
Wild beasts in midnight motion;
  Whirlwinds, and torrents showering;
The tempest-voice of ocean;
  Volcanoes, lava-pouring:
Great armies, mad-ambitious,
  In smoke and blood contending;
Huge multitudes seditious
  The air with tumult rending:
These things peace and silence are
To a mighty heart's despair!

XXV.

FAREWELL TO MORTAL LIFE.

1.

Breath, impregnate with a dream—
As the cloud with a sun-beam,
Ere descends the tempest-stream—
Farewell!
Thing of shadows; thing of fears;
Floweret drench'd by torrent-tears;
Splendour which a foam-wreath wears—
Farewell!

2.

Web upon a whirling gale;
Murmur in a desert vale
From a wretch whose cold limbs fail
In snow;
Flutter of an insect's wing,
Gasping in another's sting;
Spray of an in-veiled spring—
Art thou.

3.

Whence thou flowest, where thou tendest,
Why we love thee whilst thou rendest,
In what fearful depths thou endest,
None weet:
Leaping from the limbs of pleasure,
With all pains is thy deep measure,
From thy birth to thine erasure,
Replete.

4.

From an atom dost thou rise
Into framed harmonies,
And high thoughts that walk the skies
Sublime;
Till thy weary lamp outburneth,
And to nought its light returneth:
Dust is all thy marvel earneth
From Time.

5.

Though we salve and though we preach,
We nor medicine, nor teach:
Thy charms lurk beyond our reach,
Strange spell!

Thou, nor thine were of my choosing,
And thy loss is nothing losing:
From my frame uninterfusing—
Farewell!

XXVI.

CORFE CASTLE RUINS.

1.

In sunny beauty's self-diffused light,
That beam'd to shame the cheat of Athelwold,
She moves before me—Lo! the spiritual might
Of vision is upon me: I behold
The bleeding 'Martyr' spur his horse to speed,
And the queen smiling at the mother's deed!

2.

I've trod the very stair Elfrida trod,
And seen the summer-clouds roof fleetingly
The towers of her inheritance! Ay, strode
Above the walls where monarchs feasted high,
Sweet women sinn'd, and dungeon'd victims groan'd,
And vassals revell'd whilst their masters moan'd!

3.

Nettles and thorns and ivy overspread
The high places of the tyrants of old days;
And o'er their weed-choked hearths is idly read
The little name of each dull thing that strays

From his poor pigmy hovel, to crush'd towers,
Where the past's shadow clasps and overpowers

4.

The substance of the present. Some few flowers
Amid these silent ruins breathe and smile;
And birds and insects frame their brooding bowers
In the cleft walls—as if to reconcile
The eternal enmity of birth and death,
Ashes with blood, and airless dust with breath.

5.

The fulness and the vacancy of being,
Reality and vision, truth and fable
Alternately with blindness and with seeing
Endue my pausing spirit; and, unstable,
Yield mingled visitings of faith and doubt:
Pale adumbrations of this wreck without
Come to the chaos within—I darkly dream,
Lull'd by the unseen flow of my mind's cavern'd stream.

XXVII.

THE "BELVIDERA" OF FANNY KEMBLE.

1.

I OFT had dream'd of mighty agonies,
Rending the heart with tempests of the mind;
Painting bare death upon the cheek, and filling
With some few tears of fire the maniac eyes:
Till such imaginations, fiercely thrilling
The electric soul within me, had entwined
Their shadows in one form—dark elements combined!

2.

But vague and indistinct the gather'd vision:
MEDEA, in her babes' blood all disguised;
CASSANDRA, uttering the wild woes of Troy;
Or DIDO, wailing in that dire transition
To desolation from o'erwhelming joy;
Or CONSTANCE, throned on earth and agonized—
But now my dark dream lives, in terror realized!

XXVIII.

THE NET-BRAIDERS.

1.

Within a low-thatched hut, built in a lane,
Whose narrow pathway tendeth toward the ocean—
A solitude, which, save of some rude swain
Or fisherman, doth scarce know human motion;
Or of some silent poet, to the main
Straying, to offer infinite devotion
To God, in the free universe—there dwelt
Two women old, to whom small store was dealt

2.

Of the world's mis-named good; mother and child,
Both aged and mateless. These two life sustain'd
By braiding fishing-nets; and so beguiled
Time and their cares, and little e'er complain'd
Of Fate or Providence: resign'd and mild,
Whilst day by day, for years, their hour-glass rain'd
Its trickling sand, to track the wing of time,
They toil'd in peace; and much there was sublime

3.

In their obscure contentment: of mankind
They little knew, or reck'd; but for their being
They blest their Maker, with a simple mind;
And in the constant gaze of his all-seeing
Eye, to his poorest creatures never blind,
Deeming they dwelt, they bore their sorrows fleeing,
Glad still to live, but not afraid to die,
In calm expectance of Eternity.

4.

And since I first did greet those braiders poor,
If ever I behold fair women's cheeks
Sin-pale in stately mansions, where the door
Is shut to all but pride, my cleft heart seeks
For refuge in my thoughts, which then explore
That pathway lone near which the wild sea breaks,
And to Imagination's humble eyes
That hut, with all its want, is Paradise!

XXIX.

TO THE BIRD'S-EYE FLOWER.

1.

Thy beauty seems wrought of bright dew
That fell from the rainbow's blue
In rich drops azure and pearly;
And the lark, from beside thee upspringing,
Wild love of thy sweet eye seems singing,
As he mounts to the white clouds curly.

2.

Thou openest thy gaze to the morn,
Whose kiss on thine eye-lid is worn,
Whence it presseth a tear of splendour
And a bride, on her rich bed dreaming
Of the love in her blue veins streaming,
Wakes not with a glance more tender.

3.

Beautiful being! love-star of the flowers!
Birth-mate of the daisy in primrose hours!
  Blue gem of the emerald meadow!
Not more sweetly the lone poet sleepeth
O'er the eloquent thought which he weepeth,
  Than thou o'er thy moonlight shadow.

XXX.

TO THE BIRD'S-EYE FLOWER.

HYMN THE SECOND.

THOU look'st on my Verse, dear Flower!
And my brain draws a finer power
From thy blue and tranquil eye:
Not the love on my Lady's lid,
As she broods o'er a joy heart-hid,
Fills my soul with a dreamy sigh
More lusciously!
The daisy, the glow-worm and lark,
In blossom, in light and in song,
And dews from the rainbow's arc,
Be with thee thy sweet life long!

XXXI.

TO A BUTTERFLY AT SEA.

1.

Slight thing of sunny hours!
Upon the cups of flowers
  Folding thy wings in pleasure;
In perfume and mild airs
Fulfilling thy sweet cares,
  At bright and balmy leisure!

2.

What do thy pinions weary
Upon the ocean dreary,
  Where their light state must perish?
Upon the summer-meads,
Where air on incense feeds,
  Thou hadst enough to cherish.

3.

Here, by the strong wind driven,
Ere long thou shalt have striven,
  Thy grave will be the billow;

And thoughts of the green home,
Whence thou wouldst idly roam,
  Shall come to thy death-pillow.

4.

So Beauty's life is spent
On love's fierce element—
  Her wing'd hopes fail; she dies:
So the pale Poet's dream
Faints in the waste extreme
  Of life's realities.

XXXII.

THE BIRD.

1.

Cold rain hath fallen through the kindless spring,
Sweet bird of song!
Thou hast been mute; with wet and furled wing,
Dejected long.

2.

Summer at length is warm upon the earth;
And sun and dew
Gladden the heart of things; and thy wild mirth
Thrills heaven through.

3.

Had the spring worn the aspect of all gladness
On her fresh brow,
Thou couldst not have been further voiced from sadness,
Rich bird! than now.

4.

And to have lived to sing to this great morn,
So robed in glory!
Cold winds and chilling showers well hast thou borne,
Thing transitory!

5.

Let not despair await on gloom and sorrow,
Though dark-enduring;
For in the future there is still a morrow
High joy assuring.

XXXIII.

THE GREETING.

(A FRAGMENT.)

1.

My poet-thoughts, that long lay dead,
Are re-arisen; and must be fed
With the delight of outward beauty,
That they may freshly pay sweet duty
To God and skies and flowers and birds,
With all the hoarded wealth of words;
And give to Heaven and to Earth
Their resurrection, as their birth!

2.

Lo! every wave of that vast Sea
Like a glad thing leaps to me;
Welcoming, each to the other,
The advent of their mortal brother;

Who hath long been toss'd, as they,
On a dim and stormy way;
Now meeting on the self-same shore,
To part, and wander as before.

3.

The bare boughs greet me with oblations
Of dry leaves; whence contemplations
Rise, like ghosts of youth and grace,
Met, in winter's gathering-place,
With the ancient and the rotten;
All their witchery forgotten:
Ghosts, that still our ways condemn;
Till we join decay—and them.

4.

Upon the Sea and on the cliff
There rests a glory fugitive
Of sunbeams, lying like the grace
Of bland smiles on a wrinkled face:
And on the sailing grey-gull's wing
Strange shades the clouds are scattering:
'Tis now a white speck in the black,
And now a stain on the white rack!

5.

O! every thing to things, I ween,
The light in which those things are seen!

* * * * * *

Now, God be praised for all he gives!—
His creature, that was dead, re-lives.

XXXIV.

THE DREAM-DANCERS.

1.

No human beauty ever from the page
  Of poet, or great painter's canvass, threw
Entrancement over sense; or in an age
  Of living flesh and blood to fulness grew,
So beautiful and living as did come
  One summer-night before me in a dream,
Pacing a dance of love-delirium
  With measured motion—like a brimming stream
Which rolling in the sun we do behold,
Its broad unvarying ripples hung with gold!

2.

A Man and Woman, bare as Bacchanals,
  Clothed only in the robing light of pleasure,
And dancing to no music but the calls
  Of sighs, which faintly with their feet kept measure;

Their mingling limbs now loosed, and now entangled,
Like clustering rose-boughs when sweet airs are blowing,
Or pure etherial fires now interspangled
By winds, and now apart in glory glowing;
Their liquid eyes into each other burning,
Their kiss-curved lips still to each other turning:

3.

And thus they floated round and round, as lightly
As gold-wing'd creatures circle in the sun!
The Man still smiled rejoicing, and as brightly
As when their glorious dance was first begun;
But the ripe Woman with voluptuous feeling
Became oppress'd—a Hebe steep'd in wine
Out of Jove's cup!—and, in their midway reeling,
Sank on the bosom of her mate divine:
Then, both grew ether-pale as skies at dawn;
And o'er their forms a veil of light was drawn.

XXXV.

THE STATUE.

1.

She lieth bare, in unveil'd loveliness,
Yet nothing naked; for the perfect charm
Of beauty and of symmetry doth dress
Her figure in a raiment bright and warm—
A garb most spiritual, which doth repress
The sensual eye of sense: with one fair arm
She leaneth on a pillow, softly sinking,
And her sweet face upturns, to some voluptuous thinking.

2.

The other, bending with a rainbow grace,
Plays with the hindmost tresses of her hair,
Over her shoulder—Oh! that love-toned face!
It beams a passionate pleasure on the air,
And makes us crave some silent dwelling-place,
To gaze and live on it for ever there!

A love-thought stirs her mouth; and o'er her eyes
Appears the memory of a thousand sighs.

3.

Her rich-swell'd bosom, toward her white couch turn'd,
  Spell-takes the eye-lids; and her limbs, extended
In animate perfection, are discern'd,
  In all the harmony of structure blended,
Pressing each other's beauty: there hath burn'd
  A dream of fire about her, which hath ended;
And now she looks reposing from that vision,
And from love's dream to love inviting soft transition.

XXXVI.

THE WAKING MORN.

1.

The blue, the fair eye-blue of Morn,
With fallow cloudings islanded,
Opens in fondness, slumber-born,
O'er the loved earth beneath it spread:

2.

And, kissing it from balmy sleeping,
Lies on its breast in smiles of light;
And hastes, joy-showers of dew-tears weeping,
To realise the dreams of night!

XXXVII.

A LAMENT FOR THE PAST.

O, Early Days! and Youth! and Bloom!
Ye are exsanguent in the tomb
Of Time and Change!
The Minutes and the Airs have taken
Your glory from this form forsaken!
I cannot range
The proud earth wantonly and proudly,
Nor cry unto the ocean loudly,
With glee redundant, as of yore!
The ecstasy of Life is gone!
Like a moss'd tree, I blanch alone!
I am beloved no more!
Old Time! my Youth restore!
Ye Elements! its liveries disgorge
From your eternal maw!
Kindle new fire, wherewith I may reforge

The iron of my strength! O, for a law
Of the dead Past revocative!
To my Youth's grave, O, let my Age withdraw
For thus, for thus, it is not Life to live!

SONNETS.

I.

THE BRIDE.

Let the trim tapers burn exceeding brightly !
And the white bed be deck'd as for a goddess,
Who must be pillow'd, like high Vesper, nightly
On couch etherial ! Be the curtains fleecy,
Like Vesper's fairest, when calm nights are breezy—
Transparent, parting—shewing what they hide,
Or strive to veil—by mystery deified !
The floor gold-carpet, that her zone and bodice
May lie in honour where they gently fall,
Slow-loosened from her form symmetrical—
Like mist from sunlight ! Burn, sweet odours, burn !
For incense at the altar of her pleasure !
Let music breathe with a voluptuous measure ;
And witchcrafts trance her wheresoe'er she turn !

II.

BEAUTY VANISHED.

A CREATURE beautiful as dew-dipp'd roses,
Symmetric as the goddess sprung in marble
From out the sculptor's mind, deeply reposes
In a rich sleep of thought; and the clear warble
Of birds that greet Aurora in blue skies
Hath not a sound so holy as the sighs
That part her fruit-like lips. Is she not dreaming
A poesy inspired of panting love,
Divine as that with which the heavens are streaming
When the intense eye of the west is wove
With the aurient sun-set? She is gone! I weep:
For so all beauty passeth from the vision;
And clouds of darkness o'er the spirit creep,
Making of all her light obscure elision.

III.

THE MINGLING.

Nature, low-panting into silence, seems
In a voluptuous trance 'twixt pain and pleasure.
Like a flush'd bride, who sleeps, but still in dreams
Awhile sighs lovingly, the day is hush'd
To slumber in the west; but its warm beams
Yet breathe there of the sun: a fitful measure
Comes on the air, at length'ning intervals,
From some near-nestling bird; whilst, even as crush'd
Flowerets and leaves yield incense, fruits their juices,
The full-reposing beauty of the scene,
Press'd by the strenuous soul, deeply infuses
Its sweetness through the spirit; till between
The twain is but one life, and these clay walls
On this side Death dissolve, and all on air we lean!

IV.

THE PRESENT.

As one, a steep and slippery cliff ascending,
Pauses midway, and dares not farther climb;
But a reverting gaze beneath him bending,
Greets terror in the downward course sublime;
And 'twixt the crags above and rocks below
Quails: so, between the depths of all we know,
And the veil'd Future's unattained summit,
Despond we, till our fears around us throw
A murkier shade than death's; and all the glow
Of fancy's star-fires would in vain illume it:
But, ever and anon, Love's moon-like beaming
With a religious beauty o'er us streaming,
Nor ghost of Past, nor dream of Future riseth—
But the sweet Present all in all sufficeth.

V.

THE TRIUMPH OF LOVE.

War lay by Love: his sanguine limbs her whiteness
Bound, as might wreaths of coral ivory;
His sun-burnt cheeks from her etherial brightness
Gather'd a gentle glory; whilst a die
Of shadow from his brow her fair embrown'd,
And fell like twilight on the day profound
Of her warm eyes: then, lull'd in purple splendour,
She tamed his fierceness with her kisses tender;
And in the folding of her delicate arms
Beguiling him to savage deeds' disuse,
By the full prevalence of yielding charms
She won for long-lorn Peace a live-long truce;
Girding with moonlight hope her cloud of fears—
And half-redeem'd the world from blood and tears.

VI.

THE PARALLEL.

I CANNOT celebrate great Nature's face
When my adoring eyes are fixed there;
For then am I enrapt in my enjoyment,
And feel her charms too well to say she's fair.
When thou art on thy wooing lady's bosom,
To laud her lips, or eyes, is't thy employment?
No; thou hast scanty time to cull the blossom,
And pausest not to descant on its grace:
But when thy love hath its delirium fed,
Thou dost retire, and call on memory;
Then in thy brain is inspiration bred,
And thou salut'st her with a comment high:
So, till I from the face of Nature turn,
I cannot speak the thoughts with which I burn.

VII.

COMPARISON.

As lightning flashing on a twilight kiss
Startles the heart that in the darkness trusted,
Lest sight should make a sin of harmless bliss—
True to the law which Nature's self adjusted :
So, men's eyes striking on my musings written
Alarm my mind, that thought not to be seen,
Lest they should be with contumely smitten
And their high truth cried false by others' spleen.
Those lips are bold which bid the world defiance
And in its spite will take their dues of pleasure ;
That verse is daring which holds firm alliance
With truth, and metes the world with rightful measure :
But lips still kiss, in face of scandal's blame—
And I must write, though half the world cry *Shame !*

VIII.

ON A HUMAN HEART.

And was this loathsome clod, which now I grasp,
The vital centre of a wondrous world,
Warming a bosom for pale love to clasp?
Was this foul mass the marvel, where enfurl'd,
Like waves along the mighty ocean curl'd,
High feelings rose, that would the stars defy?
Was this the throbbing and dilating thing,
That lent all splendid beauty to the eye,
Made the lip burn with holy melody,
And floated Fancy on her rainbow-wing?
It was!—a living and a human heart!
A sun of smiles—a solemn cloud of tears!
What is it now?—Oh! let my soul depart!
She's stricken, and her glory disappears.

IX.

TO THREE SKULLS.

Still grinning? ye grim frames of vacant bone!
Still staring at me from your sockets blank?
Your noses, bitten by the grave's black frost,
Still sneering hideously? and your lean jaws lank,
Jagg'd with those gumless teeth, still horribly
Mocking the porch of lips?—Ye do accost
My waking with a warning thunder-tone;
And in your looks I read the certainty
Of something that's eternal—death, or life—
For ye with either argument are rife.
I have had horrid dreams; and ye are blest
That no more welter with such fiery rain—
Curse on your empty heads! that are at rest,
Whilst tortures now are ringing through my brain!

X.

SLEEP.

Why should'st thou rail at Sleep? poor waking Fool!
How canst thou tell what heavenly subtleties
Are in thy brain wrought by the Power of Dream?
What wondrous seeds of Rhymed Mysteries
Sown in the Soul in slumber, when the cool
And dew-lipp'd Night hath kiss'd each golden beam
That made the Day, into oblivion;
And we within her silent bosom swoon
Into a trance like Death's? What's waking pleasure,
But a forgetfulness of all of pain
That hath been and must be, with some bright treasure
Of present bliss, that no possession leaves us?
And what is Sleep? A ceasing to complain;
And happiest life, if it a sweet dream weaves us.

XI.

SPACE.

O, FOR a song of unimagined glory,
To tell the visible wonders of great Space!
And stand as on a spiritual promontory,
Looking Creation in her holy face;
And with the adoring eye of Poesy
Read the love-secrets there! Holy, all holy,
Is every aspect of the earth and sky;
And all the mighty cloud of melancholy
That from the soul without on that within
Descendeth, to the brainwork of vast dreams
Lends splendid shadowings. O, for deep words,
That, like the music of leaf-hidden birds,
Might even from the listening flowers win
Assent to the great love which in me teems!

XII.

REVELATION.

Spirit!—to God!—The Eternal Soul of Things
Is animate within us!—we aspire;
And, glorying in our elemental fire,
Expand etherially—till we embrace
At least a cloud that looks a deity;
And gazing upon Nature, face to face,
Half trace her secret fountains to their springs,
And hold a still communion with her sky.
We need no revelation of the God—
The high, instinctive Being of all Space;
For, as the sweet flower rises from the sod,
Our essence from its clay springs mountingly—
And all its heavenly birth-right doth inherit!
Ay, Spirit's revelation dwells in Spirit.

XIII.

LIGHT IN GLOOM.

The self-same play is acted day by day,
And we the weary actors in the sameness:
Our eloquent'st thoughts are dumb in their display,
Our sight not seeing, and our speeding lameness:
We walk as in a cloud; and that poor ray
That finds us in the midst, but serves to show
The deepening mist that girds us as we go.
And yet, I wot, a high and glorious light
Lies in the outward Nature's couch of fire,
To whose eternal pillows we aspire,
And of their ardent freshness dream delight—
That makes a living waking in our slumbers,
Lightens a beam of glory through our night,
And leads the Soul's streams forth, in all their crystal numbers.

XIV.

SOLACE.

Thou who dost slumber in dim apathy,
Born of this world's unfathom'd mystery—
Where nothing sweet is tasted, not even love,
Which bitterness succeeds not; where the dove
Of dear Enjoyment, by the vulture Sorrow
Is murder'd at the heart; and hope and thought,
By their intensity to torture wrought,
But gild the brief night that hath no to-morrow—
Yet, come with me! and to the altars fleeing,
For refuge from ourselves, of Nature holy,
Let us there worship, till this gloomy being
Feel gladness lighten o'er its melancholy;
And gazing on the blue sea, rocks and sky,
Our souls gush to their God, in felt eternity!

XV.

THE JOURNEY.

" We're on a journey brief; the day is bright,
" And our thoughts joyous—that we shall not tire."
We're on a journey that is infinite;
'Mid an eternal change of sun and cloud,
Cold winter showerings and hot summer fire;
Breathed on by zephyrs, struck by whirlwinds loud;
And our thoughts, floating through eternity,
Are lapt by turns in joy and agony,
In glory and in gloom; and if fatigue
Assail us not in our unresting travel,
'Tis that we make with our own souls a league
Not to look far before, but on our road
Glance round and feel employ'd: would we unravel
The Immensity beyond? We lift a weary load.

XVI.

MINDS AND THE UNIVERSE.

THERE must be mighty pantings of free thought,
Cravings profound for liberty and love
And sublime ponderings on life and death,
In all the spirits that fill mortal forms!
I cannot yet believe the human swarms
Hived on the earth, are the mere things of breath,
Instinct and form, custom, and slavery
To what their fellows damn, or may approve,
Which still they seem: the mystery round them wrought,
The source and flow of things, the Eternity
From whence they issued and to which they tend,
Must draw their souls unto their utmost bend
And turn them from life's daily littleness;
Or reason is an ape, and spirit spiritless!

XVII.

LIFE AND ITS DREAMS.

Even as a cloud, from the horizon's bound,
Floats o'er the dark sea dim and rapidly,
Passes before the sun, deriving light,
Wafts o'er the hills, as doth an airy sound,
And latching on the forehead of the night,
Faints into unseen dew—and so doth die!
Even as a far bird comes, with swift endeavour,
In happy search of regions summer-mild,
Sinks weary down upon the billows wild,
And soon within their depths is whelm'd for ever:
So is it with our life, from birth to death;
And, in their cloud and bird-flight, all its dreams
Still vanish even as a vapour's wreath,
Or perish in affliction's gather'd streams.

XVIII.

THE LIFE ETERNAL.

We have two lives. The one, is but a cheat:
A thing of mere convention, which we bear
As minions of that Congregate Deceit,
Society—sole hope of many men!
The tiny parts of one great counterfeit.
The other, fountain'd in Eternity,
Eternal is; and toward Eternity
Flows constant; self-impelling and sublime:
It recogniseth neither Space nor Time;
Contain'd not, but containing; in itself
Folding the Universe; creating all,
Of nought created; sole, and self-sustain'd!
An all-perpetual, undiscerned glory,
To which this Visible Round is darkly transitory!

XIX.

ENCHANTED GROUND.

I SAT alone, far in a meadow nook,
Fern, briars and wild-flowers dew around me weeping,
And read upon old Bunyan's Christian book
Of Pilgrims vain on Ground Enchanted sleeping:
As, musing, from the page my gaze I took,
I saw dark ivy round a wild-flower creeping;
A spider, when my eyes that trance forsook,
Its venom on a golden insect heaping,
Did I arrest with my detecting look:
Beyond, a pretty-winged thing was steeping
Its plumes in dew-beams from the woodbine shook,
At which a bird flew by, and caught it, leaping.
Ah! when these evil aspects gird us round,
'Tis best to sleep upon Enchanted Ground.

XX.

HOPE'S NEED.

The earth is full of ripe and pleasant foison,
Enough to feed its human people all
With sweet abundance; yet, save they quaff poison,
Or have recourse to water, fire, or steel,
Or strangling, or from some high point down fall
And dash their lives out, there be those must feel
Famine, and pining cold, and desolation.
O, God! sure hearts are stones? or none would want
The little which they lack in their progression
From birth to death: men's needings are but scant;
But scantier far men's charity, denying
Superfluous food to life, with hunger dying.
O, Human Thought! that in thy contemplation
Bear'st this, and hopest not—thine is sore oppression.

XXI.

AN EXHORTATION TO MANKIND.

When will it be that men shall kinder grow
In human intercourse; and not thus, savagely,
Spring upon each occasion to o'erthrow
Their fellow-travellers through mortality?
God hath apportion'd us enough of woe
In this brief journey; from within derived,
And from the elements, in which we sicken,
Grow weak and die: let not man be deprived
By man of that poor solace which doth quicken
The flagging heart and the o'erlabour'd brain,
And temper to endurance, when self-stricken,
Or time and storm-worn. Transient thing! refrain!
Sting not thy brother insect, till he perish:
A life brief as thine own, vex not; but cherish.

XXII.

TO THE PEOPLE.

The Fatal Tree that grew in Paradise,
Whose Fruit, being plucked and eaten, brought the Curse
Of Sin and Sorrow on the goodly Earth,
Must cure as it hath poison'd! Healing lies
In Knowledge for the wounds which the Old Verse
Avers were got from Knowledge: a new birth
Must rise from death; and both of that high cause
Which makes us "even as gods" be the deriven laws.
Let the gall'd Many, in their banded numbers,
Drink of the solemn Knowledge-streams that flow
Over the Land, from the exhaustless springs
Of the Redeemer-Press; till what encumbers
The people with its load be hurl'd below
Into hell-depths, and Mind be left to her free wings!

XXIII.

THE TO-COME.

We spurn thy slight decrees, ephemeral World!
And the debased necessity of things
That bows us down before them: there is furl'd
In us the banner of a fortitude,
And lowly on its sovereign rampart hurl'd.
It shall be re-exalted! There be wings
Weaving themselves within the loom of Time,
On which a race to come shall float sublime
In the just liberty of their own mood.
Thou art a tyrant high, usurping power,
Which shall a little moment be obey'd—
And then, dethroned; the disenthralling hour
Now lightens from the Future's thunder-shade!
Thy minions veil their eyes, and are dismay'd.

XXIV.

A PROPHECY.

THERE is a mighty dawning on the earth,
Of human glory: dreams unknown before
Fill the mind's boundless world, and wondrous birth
Is given to great thought; and deep-drawn lore,
But late a hidden fount, at which a few
Quaff'd and were glad, is now a flowing river,
Which the parch'd nations may approach and view,
Kneel down and drink, or float in it for ever:
The bonds of Spirit are asunder broken,
And Matter makes a very sport of distance;
On every side appears a silent token
Of what will be hereafter, when Existence
Shall even become a pure and equal thing,
And earth sweep high as heaven, on solemn wing.

XXV.

OF POETS.

Oh! do not envy Poets the poor breath
Of praise which urgeth on their sail of life
Along the troubled waters of the world;
Nor the rich power by which they twine the wreath
Of fame which crowns them when that sail is furl'd
In the calm haven of the breathless grave:
Bitter and strong and manifold the strife
Which shakes them on that voyage; every wave
Of feeling dashes o'er their weltering heart;
And all the thunder and the flash of thought
Vollies and lightens round their fitful brain;
And their high power, by which the world is wrought
To mightiest sympathies, is grasp'd in pain,
Shower'd from the bosom-tempests they impart.

XXVI.

SHELLEY.

Holy and mighty Poet of the Spirit
That broods and breathes along the Universe!
In the least portion of whose starry verse
Is the great breath the sphered heavens inherit—
No human song is eloquent as thine;
For, by a reasoning instinct all divine,
Thou feel'st the soul of things; and thereof singing,
With all the madness of a skylark, springing
From earth to heaven, the intenseness of thy strain,
Like the lark's music all around us ringing,
Laps us in God's own heart, and we regain
Our primal life etherial! Men profane
Blaspheme thee: I have heard thee *Dreamer* styled—
I've mused upon their wakefulness—and smiled.

XXVII.

SHELLEY & KEATS, & THEIR "REVIEWER."

Two heavenly doves I saw, which were indeed
Sweet birds and gentle—like the immortal pair
That waft the Cyprian chariot through the air;
And with their songs made music, to exceed
All thought of what rich poesy might be:
At which, a crow, perch'd on a sullen tree,
Dingy and hoarse, made baser by their brightness,
Would fain be judge of melody and whiteness,
And caw'd dire sentence on those sweet-throat turtles;
To which his fellow flock of carrion things
Croak'd clamorous assent: but still the wings
Of those pure birds are white amid the myrtles
Of every grove, where cull they nectar'd seed,
Whilst still on cold, dead flesh, those carrion creatures feed.

XXVIII.

"JULIAN AND MADDALO."

I READ of "Julian" and "Count Maddalo,"
Till in their spirits' presence stood my soul;
And blending with their sympathy of woe,
A tempest woke my thoughts, and they 'gan roll,
Billow on billow, toward Eternity—
And Passion's cloud hung over the vast Sea.
Where is the Essence now, that thought and spoke?
Absorb'd like water, the frail vessel broke
That held it trembling from the sand awhile?
Or doth it quiver still; and, quivering, smile
At the now clear'd-up Mystery of Creation?
Which shook it once even to its mortal seat,
Which seems the brain and heart, that burn and beat,
Till Life pants darkly for Annihilation.

XXIX.

TAGLIONI.

The music and the eloquence of motion
Breathe in quick beauty from her subtle feet;
She moveth like a moonbeam upon ocean,
Which curves and quivers as the billows fleet;
Upon the earth her fine foot falls as lightly
As winds of odour, or aërial rays
From Morn's blue eye, on a mist-woven cloud—
Or dews upon the forest and the flowers:
So round Apollo glance the golden Hours;
Bacchants, with thyrsus arm'd and cymbals loud,
So bound, in many a wine-bewitched maze,
About their joyous god; so Iris, brightly,
Weaving from sun and rain her silent wings,
Upon her pinnacle of ether springs!

XXX.

THE TRANCE.

For six long months I lived and yet was dead:
All faith and hope were gone from me; I spoke not;
My heart no longer on my spirit fed,
But on itself, and bitterly; it woke not
With the awak'ning world of things; it sunk
Into the depths of sullen-sleeping thought,
And brooded on extinction, in a drunk
And apoplex'd bewilderment! I sought
For savage arguments, wherewith to arm
My life against my life, that it might pass
Into oblivion: but the mighty charm
Of Being chain'd me to itself; a glass
All microscopic came to my Soul's eye—
I shook—the atom Time grew to Eternity!

XXXI.

THE REPROOF OF FAITH.

Even by the Wonder of the Universe
My inmost heart and brain were shaken fearfully;
And whether 'twere a blessing, or a curse,
One of the myriad moving things to be
That people it, I knew not. From the Sea
A sound of terror and a sight of gloom
Pass'd through me; and as upward, mute and tearfully,
I turn'd mine eyes for comfort, Space grew dark
And breathless as a deeply-vaulted tomb;
That my soul circled round the hueless arc,
And thence return'd unsolaced. From within
At length dawn'd consolation. Much of sun
Had shone, and yet would shine, where now was none:
Faith with the thought came back; and whisper'd—"Doubt
is Sin."

XXXII.

ATOMICS.

The cavities of tiny grains of sand
Have "deserts idle" and deep "antres vast,"
The haunts of things alive, which understand,
By usage of all senses, that they live,
Enjoy and suffer; but, no more! And we,
Of this "great globe" the creatures transitive,
Know we aught else, for sure? Eternity;
Immensity: in these our doom is cast;
With which compared, earth and its measured time
Are but as sand-grains, whereof in the nooks
We little insects take our revelry,
Laugh, weep, and turn to dust. Those dogma-books
That plague us with our immortality—
Hold they more truth of warrant than this rhyme?

XXXIII.

THE UNDECEIVING.

On the great day when I did cease to love,
A glory from the midst of things departed:
But straightway I became more solemn-hearted;
Lifting the business of my mind above
The vulgar work of sense, and even drew
A fulness from the world's new vacancy.
In the changed spirit of life which in me grew
There was a temperate and chasten'd sadness,
That gather'd in the wake of that old madness
As cloudy evening o'er the hot day-sky,
And strengthen'd with its shade my dazzled view
Of Present and Hereafter. Be my eye
Closed to all outward beauty from this hour;
Whilst in my soul I arm a change-defying power!

XXXIV.

SOUL-CREATION.

Those words I utter for the Vulgar World
Are not the speech of my in-musing heart;
Where, like to honey by the flower enfurl'd,
There lies a treasure from the World apart:
The World, that cannot pluck from me the art
Of breathing beauty into trembling song;
Which till the blood be stagnant in my veins
Must of prerogative to me belong!
An hour of calm and sea-side loneliness
Will melt out from my mind the grievous stains
Impressed there by forced worldliness;
And as an eve of stillness after storms
Shall my soul be, and with a self-caress
Beget creation of all lovely forms.

XXXV.

THE UN-CHARMED.

My pierced life was all ablood with sorrow!
For, suddenly, the veil of beauty thrown
By glorifying Youth o'er sweet To-Morrow
Fell, and disclosed to me the Future's frown;
Within the wrinkles of whose unread brow
There was a lurking something which till then
I dream'd not hung before the lives of men,
Ready to fall upon them as they grow
Into the longer knowledge of brief years:
Blank vacancy; and doubt; and strangled tears,
That never reach the eyelids; vanishing
Of all sweet things we love; death-beds; and graves;
And shadowy wrecks, where pale hopes trembling cling,
Heart-faint, and stifled by continual waves!

XXXVI.

THE CORRUPTION.

With much of baseness have I had to do—
Base men; base things!—in this relapse of mine
Into the darkness of our common life,
Through which we thoughtless of all wonders go
Of birth and life and death, as brutish swine
That for their food i' the mire make bestial strife.
Worse than Persephone dragg'd back to Hell
From midway-wending towards Apollo's sight,
Fares the pale Soul, into her fleshly cell
Resunk, from her aspirings to the light
Of that etherial day which ever burneth
In holy Thought's imagined Universe!
I have been tempted; and I feel the Curse,
As vainly now my heart to its old glory turneth.

XXXVII.

"MY TABLETS, HO!"

Time passeth o'er me like a silent cloud;
My gaze reverteth, but 'tis gone—dissolved
Into vacuity, or dim-involved
With the undiscerned winds!—Oh! Infancy,
Where be thine eyes, floating in delicate blue?
Oh! Childhood, where thy heart-high prophecy
Of dream-fulfilling bliss? Oh! Beauty's hue,
Where be thy balmy youth? Oh! Manhood proud,
Where thy stout sinews? Age, oh! where thy breath?
All blended in the infinite of Death!
Therefore, away! base heed of appetite;
And, love! be pastime for a wanton hour:
Out of this darkness must I kindle light,
And the all-powerful Shadow overpower.

XXXVIII.

TO MY SONG.

Fawn of my deer-swift Thought! that wert most young
And bounded o'er the meadows of delight,
Dew-freshen'd herbs and pleasant flowers among,
With choice of cool shade or of sunshine bright:
What hath befallen thy rejoicing state,
That thou dost gambol on the sward no more,
But still at early morn and evening late
Crouch on the sod where thou didst leap before?
A blight is on thy place of revelry,
And thou dost pluck up hemlock with thy food;
That well may sick death overdim thine eye
When poison mingles with thine infant blood:
Ah! muddy are the streams thy thirst that slake;
And thou hast honours—but they branch, to break.

XXXIX.

ROYALTY.

Feels a king's soul as mine such regal pride?
I'm hill-surrounded and star-canopied,
And upon Thought immortal am I throned;
My verse my sceptre, and my liegemen true
The tributary hearts which I imbue
With my mind's shadow: should I stand disown'd
Amid the peopled world—scorn'd of the many,
Fear'd of the few and unbeloved by any—
I am the master still of mine own fate;
Defeat cannot subdue me to its state,
Nor victory unseemingly elate:
Otway died meanly; not so Chatterton,
Whose hopes forsook and left his heart alone—
No footstool-emperor he, for man to tread upon!

XL.

PHILOSOPHY AND IMPULSE.

TO G***** T******.

When Socrates, through Plato, learnedly
Argueth against impulsive action,
I, in the ignorance of Mortality,
To his divinest meditation,
Which holdeth that achievement—difficult
As is the checking of the wind and tide—
The curbing of the Thought's and Feeling's pride,
To be within the scope and a result
Of blood and fancy-led Humanity,
Do write me down most captious heretic,
Falling to contradiction splenetic.
Ah! dear G* T**! If this did abide
Within the compass of Philosophy,
My Friend and I were spirits right orderly!

XLI.

AN ANTICIPATION.

My youth was love, and all my love was youth;
And youth and love were blended in my song;
With much of fable, but with more of truth,
And though the chain was weak, its power was strong:
For, as we pause by summer-vale, or hill,
To drink the music of a bird, or rill,
So warm hearts waited round my gushing lyre,
And loved the dreamer for his vision's fire!
But now my hair is grey, my sense is blind;
Time's ashes choke my heart's expiring glow;
And my Song, leaving this bright world behind,
Mounts to the loftier world to which I go:
I muse on deathless things; but die, alone—
A King abandon'd, by his shatter'd throne!

ADYTA CORDIS.

POEMS AND SONNETS.

POEMS.

I.

PAIN AND SOLACE.

A VISION.

1.

With her I love I enter'd a proud chamber,
Festoon'd with golden lamps, of many dies
Illumed, with pendents of rich pearl and amber;
And on the walls hung ancient tapestries,
Storied with many tales of smiles and sighs.
There, in the midst, on a low ottoman,
Sate she I loved, gazing with weeping eyes
Upon a woven mythos of Old Pan,
And Syrinx, piteous Nymph! transformed as she ran.

2.

"Thou hast destroy'd me, Traitor!" wildly turning
To greet me as I pass'd, she cried aloud;
Her fine eye flashing and her fair cheek burning:
"Thou seest me here to mine own sorrows bow'd,
Thou Dreaming Falsehood! of thy falseness proud!

Still thinking how to use me for thy lyre;
And out of my dark Passion's thunder-cloud
Lightning to draw: ay; like yon Shepherd Sire,
A living song to make of thy most dead desire.

3.

"Begone!—I shall not die!"—She said; and faded,
Like to a form of mist in evening dim,
When the true vision of the eye is shaded,
And all around with spectral face and limb
The fields and woods seem ghastly. As a Hymn
Of God long sounds within the Sinner's brain
After the Airs have tomb'd its notes sublime,
Those words still shook my heart, all pierced with pain—
As haunt a Slayer's soul the last sighs of the Slain!

4.

But with the solemn echoes as I quiver'd
Of that prophetic voice of her I loved,
Deep phrase of solace she I love deliver'd,
Which the infection of their grief removed.
That phrase:—"She shall not die!—Let it be proved
By entranced songs of living minstrelsy;
Which lark enclouded, nightingale engroved,
May pipe sweet concord to from earth and sky;
Whilst the World's loving hearts, in chorus soft, reply!"

II.

PREVENTION.

1.

Thou dartest the soul-laden light
Of thine emu-eyes, unpeer'd,
Upward to mine, as to invite
Answer coveted, but fear'd:
And the nectar in the flower
Hath not that alluring power
For the hived mechanic bee,
As for me
Of thy lips the honied dower,
Where, like a red flag on a tower,
Passion triumphs sanguinely.

2.

But other eyes are coldly near;
The charm ineffable is broken:

From my entranced eyes gather, Dear!
What else were done, what else were spoken:
The holy kiss which others see
Is but a barren kiss to me.

III.

THE APPEAL.

1.

By that power which in man
The might of intellectual mind,
Which all height and depth can scan,
Still waves o'er that in woman shrined ;
The sky-aspiring sympathies
That spurn this world's realities,
And from eager soul to soul
Fly in fire without controul—
Thee I summon to surrender
To the hopes which in me burn,
And drink feelings deep and tender
Heart from heart, as from an urn !

2.

I listen to thy bird-like singing
As to the music of some sphere,

Far in the depths of azure winging
A hymning flight, which souls may hear
That at midnight muse alone
In a thought-world of their own :
'Tis laden with a mystery deep,
That falls like shadow on me—and I weep !

3.

I look into thy deep blue eyes,
And see thy soul reposing there,
Like a rainbow in the skies ;
The creature of a smile and tear,
Arching o'er each azure sphere :
Oh ! when shall love be closing there,
Wearied with intense delight,
As a blue flower in twilight ;
Or star-fires when the moon doth peer ?
I gaze upon them, till I sleep
In an inebriate dream—and through my brain doth leap

4.

A mighty torrent of imaginings,
Full-starr'd with eyes, and clothed with wings,
All-seeing, all-pervading—
Excess of light my soul is shading !

And unless thy heart accords
That which love ne'er asks in words,
My heart, even as my lyre, will lose its strings,
And in dumb anguish die, like winter-stricken birds.

IV.

THE CUP OF JOY.

1.

The cup of my joy is filling;
Thou pourest the nectar, Dear!
And the draught will be deep and thrilling
As ever the heart came near!

2.

Pour on! pour on! till the rim
Be hidden with Love's strong wine:
That passion must flow o'er the brim
Which is shed from a face like thine!

3.

'Tis full; I have quaff'd; and my blood
In the draught hath been madden'd and quell'd:
Still I pant for the same sweet flood,
By the thirst of my spirit impell'd!

4.

Fill high, again ! fill high !
Let the nectar again gush o'er !
I faint in the fire of thine eye,
And must drain the full cup once more !

V.

THE CREED.

1.

I do believe in Heaven;
'Tis written in those orbs of seeing:
A perfect creed is given
By those celestial lights, of an eternal being!

2.

There's sweetness in the flowers
And hues with glowing beauty rife;
But in those eyes of yours
Floats a diviner grace, that speaks eternal life.

3.

Within the stars is glory,
And evidence of Heaven and God;
But the "Hereafter" story
Burns with intenser truth in that twin-sphered abode.

4.

Yet will my creed confound me;
Its oracles are too divine:
The light they pour around me
Distracts me from the god; I but adore the shrine.

5.

As you in Heaven believe,
Veil them! they are too richly clear:
Veil! and my faith reprieve—
Their light hath too much love for burning sense to bear!

VI.

LOVE'S SAFETY.

1.

Love! thou tremblest like a flame
That quivers in the air of night:
Is it the breath of love, or shame,
That strikes and seals thine eyes of light?

2.

Like the lark in cold air singing,
The glow-worm in the chill winds gleaming,
Dost thou quail; a sleep seems clinging
Toward thy bosom, passion-dreaming.

3.

Wake! for eyes are watchful near;
Thy face betrays forbidden feeling:
Wake! for, oh! bethink thee, Dear—
Love's safety lies in love-concealing.

VII.

THE LIFE OF FLOWERS.

1.

" I would, dear Love ! that I thy convert were
To that strange lore—' The fair flowers dream and feel,
Are glad and woful, fond and scornful are;
And mutely conscious how the unresting wheel
Of Time revolveth, and doth hourly steal
Their beauty, and the heart-companionship
Of their nectarious kindred, that reveal
Their souls to sunlight, and with fragrant lip
Drink the abundant dews that from God's eyelids drip.'

2.

" But then, I never dare another cull,
To crush its being, and for ever end
Its commune with its fellows beautiful:
Ah ! no; presence and absence never blend
A consciousness about them; or to rend

Lover from lover, in their early wooing,
When even the rainbow their dew'd eyes transcend ;
For our adornment merely—oh ! 'twere doing
Sweet creatures bitter wrong, with our worst woes induing.

3.

" At least, for conscience' sake, I'll not believe
That they are sensible to hearted feeling ;
For in no creature's being would I weave
Those griefs which even now I am revealing
In tears and sighs, from lips and eyelids stealing—
Sad rain and wind of my heart's laden cloud !—
By which, if they do feel, with wounds unhealing
Their parted spirits must be cleft and bow'd,
Till they grew pale and sere, and wore Death's common shroud."

4.

Then—to the lover's and the poet's warning
Attend ! as to a Delphic oracle :
When flowers into the grey eyes of the Morning
Peer, in awaken'd beauty, from Night's cell ;
On the warm heart of Noontide when they dwell;
Or close in loveliness at Twilight's feet—
They have their thoughts and dreams ; and thou dost quell

A gentle spirit in each blossom sweet
(Which its love-conscious mates for ever pine to greet—

5.

And pine in vain !) which thy small hand doth sunder
From its green birth-place !—Art of those that sleep
In common thought, to whom there is no wonder
In all the Universe sublime and deep—
Invisible and visible ! There weep
Dews of a Morning round us, which must break,
And unveil all things o'er which darkly sweep
The night-shades of our ignorance. Awake !
And in this creed believe—for Love's, if not Truth's sake.

VIII.

TO A GLOW-WORM.

1.

Beauty through all Being
Sheds her soul divine;
But our spirits, fleeing
Still, from shrine to shrine,
To kneel to her delights, far in the midst repine.

2.

Ev'ry vision splendid
That our dim eyes greeteth,
By a cloud attended,
Its own light defeateth;
And sorrow strikes the heart from every joy it weeteth.

3.

Drop of dewy light!
Liker dew than fire;
Lit to guide the flight
Of thy mate's desire;
Thou look'st a fairy robed in a moonbeam's attire.

4.

In thy leafy net-work
Thou, enshrined, dost glow,
And a beamy fretwork
O'er its verdure throw—
Thou little spirit of light, green-paradised below!

5.

Twilight, the dim ghost
Of the bright day ended,
From the awful host
Of great hills descended,
Reveals thy magic lamp, by silent genii tended.

6.

Beautiful the glory,
Pallid lamp of eve!
Twilight transitory
Doth from thee receive,
When deep in herbs and flowers thy splendours thou dost weave.

7.

When the verdant floor
And blue vault of night
Love's star gildeth o'er
With its holy light,
Thy rays responsive glance to its aerial height.

8.

Silver-fretted clouds
In the vaulted blue,
Likest are the shrouds
Which thy beams imbue
Of lightly-stirring leaves that palace thee in dew.

9.

Eyes which sorrow dampeth
With the grief of love,
That in beauty lampeth
Through their lashes, wove
With crystal tear-work, beam like thee in dewy grove.

10.

When thy fires, in number,
Brightest beams retain,
Clouds break on the slumber
Of the air, in rain—
Even as too many smiles do herald tearful pain.

11.

Centred in sweet bushes,
Drench'd by the fast rain,
Where thine emerald blushes,
Paled, but bright, remain,
Thou art as a calm heart which sorrows beat in vain.

12.

Round thee wild winds howl,
Dashing thee to earth ;
Where thy tranquil soul,
With unalter'd mirth,
Gleams—as in our fierce world sweet innocence and worth.

13.

Through the tempest loud
Thou dost calmly pierce,
From the perfumed shroud
Which thy beams immerse—
As through the storms of Time the Poet's balmy verse !

14.

Beauteous as thou art,
Memory makes thee dim :
Thou disturb'st the heart,
Twilight's living gem !
And my recurring thoughts cling to a mournful theme.

15.

For one vanish'd hour,
Gulf'd in the dead past,
Sighs and tears I pour
To the wave and blast;
And my recurrent soul to its own depths is cast !

16.

Ne'er on leaf and blossom
Do thou shine again,
Till this weary bosom
Sleeps, beneath them lain;
Then nightly on my grave for epitaph remain.

IX.

EVENING.

1.

The dews are falling, the dews are falling;
The lark is in his place of rest;
The swallows swift in the air are calling,
Intent upon their insect-quest:
Small moths o'er every bramble flit;
The ants are still their labours plying;
A massy cloud, by sunset lit,
Over the daylight's grave is lying;
And all the north is densely hid
By an air-piled cloud-pyramid—

2.

Oh! my Life's distant Spirit! wert thou near,
I would not offer up this thought-born tear
On the dim altar of my solitude;
For in the shadow of the coming Dark,

Which on the forehead of the East doth brood,
Thine eyes were floods of joy for my soul's bark:
But in my visions lonely
Thy spectral memory only
Proffers to my mute love an unsubstantial food.

X.

A KNELL.

1.

O, how absurd to weep,
When the world is dissolving
And stars are revolving
To death,
That an insect should sleep
A slumber deep
Wherein is no vile breath!

2.

She is gone in her beauty—gone!
In the grave she is lying!
And I, on the blank earth sighing
Alone,
Despair!
Memories come blightingly o'er me;
All visions of Hope sink before me,
And the Sun seems a curse to the Air!

3.

O, dare I my life-blood pour
On the sod of thy grave, dead Flower!
With my blood the dry earth might devour
My grief!
But dear ones yet linger beside me;
And still through all storms that betide me
Must shake my life's withering leaf!

4.

'Tis folly to weep; to weep!
Thou art but an atom, asleep.
The Universe still rolls on—
But I am alone; alone!

XI.

THE VOW.

1.

For a kiss of that blood-rich mouth,
Whence low music is faintly flowing,
I pine—and not in vain;
For the passion within me growing,
As from odorous flowers the south,
Breathes incense from my brain.

2.

And a song even now is gushing
From my soul, o'er the human world,
That may not basely die!
Like the bud of the rose, unfurl'd,
Lady! why is thy fair cheek blushing?
Sweet lady! tell me why.

3.

By the youth in thy life-blood fleet!
By the love that should fill thy heart!
I'll kiss thee ere the moon
Shall to-night from the stars depart;
And thy dream shall be strange as sweet
Ere they in daylight swoon!

XII.

CONSOLATION.

1.

In the sorrow of this silence
Which I bear, from thee apart,
I know I'm present still, Dear!
With the blood in thy young heart.

2.

I know that i' the morn and eve,
Whilst sitting by thy parlour-fire,
Thy thoughts still turn to me, Dear!
With the pining of desire.

3.

Through the green lanes and the woodlets
As thou strayest, pensive-eyed,
I know that in thy thoughts, Dear!
I'm press'd to thy warm side.

4.

As thou pausest to converse
With the Daisy, in its quiet,
Thou pitiest my changed fate, Dear!—
Enslaved to the town's riot!

5.

That universal, deathless flower,
In summer's sun and winter's weather—
The lamb of the sweet flowers, Dear!—
We oft have bless'd together.

6.

It is a link between us ever;
Creator of love-presence real!
And whilst we've one to gaze on, Dear!
Absence is a thing ideal.

7.

I know I'm ever with thee, Dear!
In thy heart and in thy brain;
And with the balmy knowledge, Dear!
My heart redeems its pain!

8.

In the sorrow of this silence
  Which I bear, from thee apart,
I know I'm living warm, Dear!
  With the blood in thy full heart!

XIII.

THE PORTRAIT.

1.

The word of thy heart hath been broken—
I wear not thy sweet picture yet;
Though with fondness the promise was spoken
Which Love cannot speak—and forget.

2.

'Tis false; thine adorer blasphemes:
For what could dull painter achieve
Of portrait so true as these dreams
Of our Past in the Present can weave?

3.

In my spirit thy features are drawn:
Thy lips open crimsonly there;
And thine eyes shed their full moonlight dawn
Through the rich-floating clouds of thy hair.

4.

The word of thy heart is fulfill'd;
Of thy promise the import is plain:
In my heart are thy features instill'd,
And thy form is all limn'd in my brain!

XIV.

THE VEIL.

1.

As the sun in the heaven of day,
  As the moon in the sky of night,
Thou takest thy lustrous way
  Through my thoughts, in thy beauty's light:

2.

Shedding beauty and warmth and splendour
  O'er the world of my heart and brain,
And with shadows of feeling tender
  Far-streaking my memory's plain:

3.

Making glitter the streams of my thought;
  Expanding the flowers of my feeling,
Resplendent with sweet dews, caught
  From the heaven of thy high revealing!

4.

As a glow-worm lies hid in the shroud
  Of its own exceeding light;
As a planet obscured in the cloud
  Which its splendour maketh bright—

5.

In my thought is thy beauty conceal'd;
  In my heart hides thy passion pale—
Their bright presence only reveal'd
  By the glory which is their veil.

XV.

THE HEART-THIRST.

1.

I THIRST for thy beauty, Dear!—
Sweet thirst in my spirit alway!
Of the flowers of my heart-spring, Dear!
The dew and the morning-ray.

2.

Again to hear thee speak, Dear!
Were to wake in the music of Heaven,
When the death-sleep is taken away, Dear!
And the life that sleeps never is given.

3.

Again the sight of thy smile, Dear!
Were a glance of the light of a star
Which ruleth the date of our life, Dear!
With a power that is near whilst afar.

4.

Again to see thee move, Dear!
  Were to gaze on all visions of grace
Which the great bards sow thick in our air, Dear!
  And our thoughts in their silence embrace.

5.

Again for our hands to clasp, Dear!
  For the blood in our lips to converse,
Were a touch of that mystic power, Dear!
  Which kindled the Universe.

6.

I thirst, I die for thy presence, Dear!
  Pure thought in my spirit alway!
Of the bounding streams of my soul, Dear!
  The sunlight on every spray!

XVI.

FATALISM.

1.

The flower must imbibe the dews
  Whenever the bright dews bead it;
To flow the stream cannot refuse
  Whilst its springs with plenty feed it:

2.

The crystal lakes must reflect
  The clouds and the planets pale;
Trees must bend and their pride be wreck'd
  In the breath of the mighty gale:

3.

Air hath no power to be free
  Of the cloud and the wind and the lightning,
Which it draws from the earth and sea
  In the hours of its purest brightning:

4.

Earth hath no self-arm'd defence
That can guard it from heat, frost and storm,
And must quail in the influence
Sun-suck'd from its own heart warm:

5.

And thy heart must shed into mine
Its joy and its grief together;
And my soul sink as deeply in thine
As the stars lie engulf'd in the ether.

6.

For woe or for weal let it be,
For evil or good, life or death—
Love to us is as much a destiny
As to a babe is its breath!

XVII.

BEAUTY'S PREDICAMENT.

'Twixt Passion and Indifference Beauty sat;
Prudence to this, Love swaying her to that:
And thus Indifference with his cold mouth spoke:—
"Most easy, Lady! is my quiet yoke:
I lead thee nor to trespass nor desire;
And hold thee temperate in the midst of fire!"
Said Passion, with a voice all tremulous—
His pale cheek crimson'd, eye diaphanous:—
"O, fly me not for him to whom the sun,
Moon, stars, in their blue-bedded union,
Are but a common show; whom flowers and song
Charm to no feeling as he gropes along;
Who, meting all things with a niggard measure,
Still coldly stagnates betwixt grief and pleasure;
And, freezing, in his cell doth sleep and die,
With no heart his in all mortality!

O, turn to me! for I can colour heaven,
And robe the grey morn and the purple even
In more than their own glory; air and skies
Fill with dream'd memories of Paradise;
And bid the earth teem with high thoughts and feelings
That for my listless foe have no revealings!
I with a word can wake heart-melody;
I with a glance can make felicity;
I with a touch can call up ecstasy!"—
And what did lady Beauty in this strait?
As Prudence bade, to where Indifference sate
She turn'd, and seem'd to move: Love nearer flew,
And an invisible chain so round her threw,
That, whilst to reach Indifference she tried,
He drew her deftly to sweet Passion's side;
And fix'd her there a prisoner, rapt and bound.
But long she breathed not on this human ground!
What chanced was sad: in that new, warm controul,
She died amid the sweets of her own soul—
Just as poor bees, in station over-sunny,
Are drown'd i' the hive of their own molten honey.

XVIII.

THAT DAY.

1.

The sun, dear! the sun, dear!
Had a voice in his every ray,
To tell thee, dear! tell thee, dear!
Who was waiting for thee that day.

2.

The birds were singing sweetly, dear!
Upon every sun-gilt spray;
And this said all their songs, dear!
"Why comes she not here this day?"

3.

The water was rippling brightly, dear!
In its old restless way;
And every ripple laugh'd, dear!
To see me alone that day.

4.

The daisy from the grass, dear!
Peep'd up, in its own sweet way,
With a sister flower by its side, dear!
More blest than was I that day!

5

The winds were breathing sweetly, dear!
And kissing, in their warm play,
Kissing my brow and my lips, dear!
More fond than thou that day!

6.

The bud on the naked bough, dear!
Seem'd to start from the old decay;
Call'd forth by the sudden shine, dear!
More inspired than thou that day.

7.

The new-fallen lamb from the sod, dear!
Arose, with but brief delay;
And blithly follow'd its dam, dear!
More alive than thou that day.

8.

The clouds, dear! the clouds, dear!
Were each touch'd by a loving ray;
And I the only cloud, dear!
That sullenly look'd that day.

9.

All things enjoy'd the sun, dear!
And smiled, in their spring-time way;
But I could not enjoy the sun, dear!
For the want of thy smile that day.

XIX.

A PLEA FOR ABSENCE.

1.

THERE is ice in my heart,
  There is fire in my brain:
Oh! let me depart,
  Nor behold thee again!

2.

Upbraid me not, Dearest!
  My destiny calls me;
Not the death which thou fearest,
  But oblivion appals me:

3.

I would wave with the bough,
  I would sing with the bird,
With the wild waters flow,
  In the thunder be heard;

4.

In the sunbeams flash bright'ning,
With the flower shed perfume,
Blaze electric in lightning,
In the tempest be gloom :

5.

I would breathe with the wind,
With the stars be all-seeing ;
I would live in the mind
And be part of its being !

6.

Then must nothing molest
The proud flight I pursue ;
I shut love from my breast,
Thy dear eyes from my view :

7.

But when wrung with the toil
Of the thought-weaving brain,
Round thy heart will I coil—
And ne'er leave thee again !

SONNETS.

I.

INDIRECTION.

1.

Lady! I know not what dark spell inthrals me,
Shutting dear Beauty from my senseless soul!
List I thy music? A dread accent calls me
Unto Death's sepulchre, or grass-green knoll!
Feel I thy little hand, fast closed in mine,
A lily field, fair-river'd with clear blue?
I clasp Death's icy fingers; and combine
Therewith mine own, till they grow lifeless too!
Or gaze I on thine eyes, my own eyes' glass,
Where Light hath made two azure palaces?
Death's sockets fright me; and obscurely pass
Worms through their blanks, and fouler things than these!
Press I my lips upon thy queenly brow?
I bite the dust of graves, and graveward grow!

2.

There is a matchless beauty in thine eye,
Where gentle Love, as in a temple, dwells;
But there the shadow of Mortality
Lies deeply buried, and a sigh compels
From those who look into the gloom of things,
And see Decay lurk in the floweret-bells;
And black Corruption in the brightest springs;
And deadly Famine where the harvest swells;
And a dry Desert where the forest rings
With the glad songs of spring's wing'd oracles;
Storms in the clearest sky, and in the spheres
A Chaos! Unto such, thy smiles are tears;
And the bright beauty of thy love-lit eye
Full of the shadow of Mortality!

II.

REMEMBER THEE!

And dost thou doubt that I remember thee,
Because no word of thee adorn'd my letter?
Oh, God! by my dark fate which is to be,
And by the sorrows my strong soul that fetter—
My innate gloom of spirit—I do swear
To my rack'd heart, an oath religious there,
That my mad soul unto thy memory sighs,
As the lost traveller to the only star
That lit his path, now dying in the clouds:
O, mournful is the gloom my sky that shrouds,
And my calm hopes betost in tempest are;
Yet 'mid my sadness thoughts of thee remain;
And the deep light of thy unfellow'd eyes
Hath graven fiery records on my brain!

III.

"MANY;" YET, BUT "ONE."

Say, I love "Many"—well, dear soul! I do;
But the bright object of my love is "One:"
I love a thousand flowers, of every hue,
For all are beautiful, though similar none;
I love a thousand stars, for all are bright,
And with their radiant beauty cleave the sight:
Then, though I have, as thy sweet lips complain,
On many a lip of ruby banqueted;
Of many a bright eye the rich-streaming rain
Of light drunk with my soul, then nectar-fed;
'Tis the same spirit I adore in all;
And must, till mine, or Reason's funeral:
'Tis the one deity of Beauty I
In many a matchless temple deify.

IV.

A HYMN TO MELANCHOLY.

On the soft rose of her most vernal cheek
My warm lips take their banquet tremblingly :
She is not angry—no ; nor doth she speak ;
But her soul argues from her rich-ray'd eye,
By of bright tears a starry embassy,
That herald solace—Ah ! my Spirit's Woe !
Thy moody fit hath prompted, in an hour,
More than had ever issued from the flow
Of Joy, vine-crown'd with all rejoicing power.
Oh ! then I bless thee, god-born Melancholy !
And thou art wisdom, though fools call thee folly :
The brief duration of my lone life's dower
Fleets to extinction ; but, heart-led by thee,
I've raised a flower to scent Eternity.

V.

THE CHANGE.

That day, since which the earth-saluting sun
Hath seven times gilt the forehead of the sky,
Nature was joyous; and thou, gentle one!
Sat beaming on me with thy heaven-starr'd eye,
Whose radiant glory mine drank flashingly:
Our cheeks held union, like two roses meeting;
Our lips communed, with love's intemperate greeting;
Our sighs convulsed each other, and the hour
Drew half its deadly depths of fearful sweetness,
From the conviction that our passion's flower,
Brief bud and blossom, grew with dying fleetness.
Now all the air is cloud; and I am cheating
My utter sorrow with a dream of thee—
Making a substance of shade memory.

VI.

THE GLOW-WORM.

When once I kiss'd thee, my soul's Idol new!
A little glow-worm was our love's sole witness;
Whose pretty lamp gleam'd with its emerald hue,
But shadows broke not, weeting well their fitness:
And since, I often have comparison'd
Its fairy light to thee and thy dear love—
Lit up in twilight late, the broad day shunn'd;
Glowing a glory in the world's dim grove;
Held in thy heart as that within its bush—
This painting leaves with light, that cheeks with blush;
And then, for thy fair self—just such a light
As throbb'd from that sweet summer-lamp of eve,
Came melting from thine eyes on my dark sight,
And did my lit soul with bright chains enweave.

VII.

THE RIVER.

When last we gazed upon that happy river,
Whose bliss those mantled boughs bend low to share,
'Twas bright as heaven, and the bounteous giver
Back of their beauty to the things above it;
And we as tranquil as its waters were,
That with the eyes of love look'd down to love it:
But now, the thick mists of the morn are o'er it,
Hanging like fate above its flowing life;
And musing now alone, I thus deplore it—
'Tis with the image of our own lot rife;
For o'er our bosoms hath the mist of sorrow
Swept shroudingly—and thence this grief I borrow:
The river through its sun-pierced veil shall peer,
The morning of our hearts may never clear.

VIII.

THE LETTER.

The set sun of my joy again ariseth:
By thy sweet letter is my soul revived;
And as a sudden lamp dark sleep surpriseth,
Thy greeting starts my heart, in slumber gyved.
Thou hast wept o'er the closure of thy page;
And weeping words with weeping tears are blotted—
From the same fount that hath from age to age
Gush'd with the dew to all fond thoughts allotted:
Oh! they do seem the eloquent presage
Of bliss hereafter, sweet, though sorrow-spotted.
On "pity," "love me," "cherish," and "forget,"
Have drops downfallen—the sweet words still seem wet:
Thus, thus on dry tears I moist tears let fall—
Would they were on thy cheek, whose rose would tinge
them all!

IX.

POSSESSION.

Those lips are mine! for on them I have set
The living seal of passionate possession:
Those brows are mine which like a coronet
Arch o'er her sweet eyes, in their royal session
Of high debate concerning ecstasy,
How it may hold off grief! for on them I
Have breathed the flush'd soul of idolatry:
Mine those debaters high! and mine those tresses
Which hold my falcon spirit in their jesses!
Mine that white hand, inlaid with tracery
Of delicate blue! and mine that globed shrine,
Where Love dwells pantingly!—All, all is mine!—
Nor do I but possess them by a name;
But the true heart-lord of those riches am!

X.

RESEMBLANCE.

Sweet lights and shades from outward objects stealing
O'er the receiving tablet of the eye,
Form pictures there, that to the inner feeling
Give colour'd impresses; which Memory
Stores in her galleries of glorious Art,
Holding a magic order in each part;
That when again like combinations strike,
The past springs to the present, seen alike;
Not clearer, present, to the present eye,
Than past, made present by woke memory:
Nay, not so clear; for that sweet face I view,
Soft light and shade to my fix'd sight revealing,
Glows not so real, in its faintest hue,
As that resembled face, eternal in my feeling.

XI.

THE WRITTEN PORTRAIT.

Were I a Painter, I would fix thee now!—
Thy dark hair, with its thick-entangled curls,
Hanging like silken clouds by either brow;
Thy forehead peering o'er, more white than pearls;
Thine eyes, with a bright glory just ascended
From the Elysium of thy beating heart;
Thy cheeks, deep-flush'd with roses, all unblended
With the pale lily, whose demurer art
Plays round thy lips, whose exquisite carnation
Closes and opes, as mirth's sweet inspiration
Comes o'er them, like a zephyr whose soft wing
With freshening dew is laden—Lo! 'tis traced:
Thy picture glows in words; a colouring
Whose hues are fire—And shall they be effaced?

XII.

"HERE" AND "THERE."

The trees are Here in equal majesty;
As beautiful, though mellow'd by the year
From pleasure into thought: flowers, too, are Here;
As sweet, and sun-died in their livery:
And Here are gurgling brooks and rivulets;
And hills and vales, more lofty far and deep;
Round which the sun in holier glory sets,
Moon and stars rise, and wild winds wake and sleep,
And glad birds sing as sweetly: rocks are Here,
And the vast deep they gird, which were not There:
Then, why this sense of utter vacancy,
That weighs upon my heart and dims my eye?
She is not Here who blest me in the night!—
Gone like the fairy lamps that lent us light!

XIII.

THE RING.

As the blue Girdle of the Universe
Doth all the warring elements enclose
That battle through the sphered Infinity—
Winds, lightning, thunder, light, and heat, and life,
And all the glories in our vision rife
Around the orb on which we dream and die :
So one mind's universe of joys and woes ;
Of passions that make all our bliss a curse ;
Of smiles, sighs, tears and laughter ; and the treasure
(For bane or good, as well or ill applied)
Which lurks within the heart's rich-veined mine—
Seems circled by this gold's enchanted measure,
Which doth engird the deity divine
That breatheth through the Soul's Creation wide.

XIV.

THE BANQUET.

Beside the blazing hearth we silent stood,
Both lonely in our feelings and our fate,
And faint in frame and mind: a cloud of blood
Rose to her cheek, and from its bosom darted
Etherial lightning to her eye sedate,
Which then flash'd gorgeously—I stood the same;
Her sweet lips quiver'd like the glow-worm's flame
When the winds rave—yet stood I inward-hearted;
My hands were clasp'd in hers—my soul was dead;
At length her lips, breathing Love's balmy south,
Made fresh my feverish hand—I woke, and fed
Upon the loveliest and the rosiest mouth
That ever gated the rich life of breath—
And there would feed, even when they banquet Death!

XV.

THE HELL-MIST.

We walk in hell! for, reeking from the river,
Dense vapours roll upon the atmosphere,
Making a murky horror in the air;
Till, gall'd in sense and sight, all life doth quiver,
And many a gasping heart groans forth a prayer
For death, before such life. Enchantress dear!
Whose wand is beauty, on the lustre clear
Of thy sweet eyes I fix a constant gaze,
Lest in the infernal and condensing maze
I lose all memory of light, and rave;
For darkness wraps the earth as in a grave,
Where they alone are radiant. Near! more near!
Let me not lose the Elysium of one beam;
A real thing in this infernal dream!

XVI.

MOTHER AND CHILD.

Sweet rose-cheek'd infant of a blue-eyed mother!
Thou beauteous germ, sprung from a glorious blossom!
That liest on thy parent's streaming bosom,
Fair as a rainbow on the blue-vein'd sky,
Or sunbeams on a bed of roses white.
Art thou the embodied spirit of delight,
That feedest even on woe? Oh! let me smother
Thine infant lids with kisses, as they lie
Half-closed upon thy yearning mother's breast,
From whence thou drainest life in ecstasy!
Couldst thou but know the sorrow which is guest
Of the fond heart that feeds thee, thou wouldst weep
A piteous fountain from thine innocent eye,
And thy nectarious food in the salt crystal steep.

XVII.

THE DREAM.

I DREAM'D the lady whom I love was dying—
Was dead, and in eternal silence lying;
Whilst I, as is my wont, to hide the feeling
That rent my inmost heart of life asunder,
Affected laughter, and awhile pretended
To read some page of wondrous poesy—
(The Northern Ploughman's 'twas) but quickly ended
That fearful struggle at despair-concealing;
And an electric grief fell loud as thunder,
Withering as lightning, on my brain and heart:
Upon the floor, groaning and ravingly,
I dash'd my forehead, and wild shriek'd aloud;
Until, methought, she leapt out of her shroud,
And hail'd me *Dead*—and we no more did part.

XVIII.

THE PICTURE.

The shades of night around thy portrait, Dear!
Are gather'd, till thy semblance waneth dim;
And what awhile ago like thee was clear,
Shews indistinct in feature and in limb:
And such hereafter will the shadows be
On thy sweet image in my memory.
Taper and fire, with artificial light,
Give back thy painted likeness to the sight;
And fancy in far years to come may shed
Brightness on recollection, and again
Stamp thee upon my soul. Ah! darkness fled,
Another morn will on thy picture rain;
But know I not what sun can e'er restore
That morning of my heart which passeth o'er.

XIX.

THE MIRTH OF SORROW.

The sorrows of my nature well thou knowest,
Thou who canst feel for those who deeply feel;
And in thy heart's esteem were I the lowest,
That gentle heart should not thus all reveal
Its grief and anger at the fitful mood
Which, wounding those I cherish, breaks the sadness
That else would sink me into listless madness,
And turn to poison what is now my food,
Sweeten'd by these wild startings: solitude
Had seen me at thy feet in silence kneeling,
And weeping on thy lap, Dew of my Years!
What outlet, when forbidding eyes intrude,
For my o'erflowing soul's tempestuous feeling,
But that mad mirth?—It now is calm'd in tears.

XX.

THE SORROW OF MIRTH.

Oh ! anything but that unfeeling mirth,
Those heartless snatches of unmeaning song !
It is assumption merely, and hath birth
In deepest sadness ; and the effort's need
That galls my spirit with indifference seeming,
In its re-action will but prove more strong
The chain that is around thee : let us weed
Our hearts of briars, and leave one sweet flower
To drink the dews of love and the bright beaming
Of thought's internal joy ! Shall every shower
That will pour down from life's still-changing sky
Make the rich blossom veil its peerless eye
And stoop its nectar'd beauty to the sod ?
Then must it wither soon ; and to dull earth be trod !

XXI.

THE SYMBOL.

The mystic Circle of Eternity
For ever is around our souls revolving:
Sweet flowers are circular; sweet fruits are orb'd,
And in Time's circle live and are absorb'd,
As we and all things; in the circled sky,
The rounded earth and moon, each planet sphered,
Wheel round the mighty circle of the sun
In orbed motion, true and self-involving:
The myriad fiery cirques that robe the azure,
Beaming a golden glory without measure
From the blue height of their constellate throne,
Bear the same sacred figure. This gemm'd ring,
By Nature's great religion thus endear'd,
Symbols my love—a centre-circling thing.

XXII.

TO HER LOVER.

"I AM most wretched, Dear! to see you merry;
Smiling, and raising smiles on others' cheeks;
Whilst with a sad face in my heart I bury
A passionate love for thee, which almost breaks
My spirit with its great power: to hear you laugh
And jest amid the free and empty-hearted
And gather seeming pleasure from all eyes,
When from within me hath all sense departed
Of joy, save that which in your fondness lies,
And bliss from thine eyes only can I quaff—
My heart is eaten by its inward sighs;
For all thy gentle vows seem mockeries:
But even then thine eyes to mine will turn
With a soft-lighted love, that cannot falsely burn!"

XXIII.

UNRAVELMENT.

I know full well, Sweet! why thou canst not bear
That I should take me to my books and pen,
Though they make light the heavy garb I wear
Of doubt and thought, that folds my spirit within
Her shrouded self: thou lov'st me—that I know;
And so around me do thy feelings grow,
Thou canst not turn thee from the one great theme
For ever of fond hearts the restless dream:
And therefore it disturbs thee to behold
Thy lover, with a perseverance cold,
Pursue the great heart-business of his being—
To win beyond the grave a sense and seeing.
But, oh! content thee: in his absence long
Thou art the breathing soul of half his song!

XXIV.

THE WOOD.

Why, here we are alone: the dark trees wave
Their fingery branches in the ceaseless wind;
And grass and moss the tangled pathway pave,
Where daisies lift their heads, in vestal guise,
And open their snow-white and pinky eyes
In beauty which the shadows of the wood
Too chastely cloister. Let me read the mind
Which gushes o'er thine aspect, like a flood,
And thence draw warranty. It is derived!
In that eye-glory is my passion shrived!
Our lips kiss quiveringly; again!—no more!—
Thy very life seems stifled in held breath,
And a dim shadow sweeps thine eyelids o'er—
A nearer greeting were delirious death!

XXV.

THE CRONE.

Beldam ! Why hither must thy slow feet stray,
To gather dry sticks for thy desolate hearth,
Whose fire thou feedest with that scanty fuel,
To keep thine old blood warm whilst winds are cruel ?
Amid the myriad pathways of the earth,
Was there no other for thy groping way
Than this, thou crooked and time-eaten hag !
Wherein thy witch-like presence hath enchanted
Hearts from the brink of bliss on which they panted ?
Were diamonds hung upon thine every rag,
And thy crook'd crutch a wand of Fairyland,
To work all alchemy at thy command,
Love's church should ne'er absolve thee, hoary Crone !
Of the foul sacrilege thine eyes have done.

XXVI.

THREE DISCOURSES ON ONE TEXT.

1.

" It is because I love you so"—It is !

It is because you love me that you tremble,

Like wind-touch'd foliage, at my gentlest kiss :

I fear to kiss thee ; thou canst not dissemble :

But as an ancient sibyl, when inspired

By her presiding god, all o'er did quiver,

Like the dash'd surface of a storm-swept river,

And show'd without that she within was fired—

Thou, shaken by the mystic spirit of love,

Betray'st its inward workings to all eyes.

Ah, Sweet ! concealment doth the heart behove ;

And they who would be blest must stifle sighs :

Then, if thou lov'st me, do not love betray ;

But underneath a cloak let us have sunny way.

2.

" It is because I love you so"—By Love!
There is more poesy in that sweet phrase
Than in all songs of old, or later days:
A doting sorrow in me it doth move,
And a strange quailing of the heart, which shaketh
Like calmest waters ere the thick rain breaketh
From the sky's clouded breast. Would we had never
Stolen each other's secret with our eyes;
But let it in deep veilings sleep for ever!
A curse awaits on Nature's sympathies;
And they are blest whose souls are cold and free:
And yet I would not, for Eternity,
Cancel one moment of the dreamy past
On which the shadows of our hearts were cast!

3.

" It is because I love you so"—It is!
The deadly poison of deep love is in thee,
Which thou hast gather'd from my touch and kiss.
It is because you love: a deity

Featured and form'd for eyes' idolatry,
Though he should greet thee with essential love,
Could not thy being so divinely move
As these my mortal lips, didst thou adore not:
O, hallow'd be the day I sought to win thee!
And the indelible past do thou deplore not;
For though thy passion be now check'd and blighted
By the cold air of present circumstance—
(Poets are Prophets, and dispute with Chance!)
Some hour a sun shall rise, and thy heart's world be lighted.

XXVII.

PROMISE.

I go; but, do not weep!—I will remember
Thine every accent till we meet again;
The bright fire of my love shall ne'er know ember,
But purely burn, like to the soul of wine:
I'll think and dream of thee; I'll ne'er recline
To slumber, but I'll wish my couch were thine;
Nor wake, and sigh not for thee: and by letter
I'll break the distance which our love doth fetter,
And speak to thee in love-born characters;
And on the wide sea-waving of my verse
A rich shower of sweet thoughts of thee shall rain,
And stories of our hearts will I rehearse:
Let this assurance stanch thy bleeding woe—
Thine image follows me where'er I go.

XXVIII.

THE SHAME.

"It is a shame that we are forced to part!"—
It is a shame to pluck sweet flower from flower,
That offer incense to each other's heart;
It is a shame that dews on flowerets met
Should be dispersed by the casual wind;
It is a shame the sun should ever set,
And rob the warm world of his kiss of fire;
That ever clouds before the stars should lower,
And hold the earth from her intense desire
Of gazing on her sister spheres above:
But still these shames will be, and more than these,
In this still-changing world; and, therefore, Love
Must bear his sorrows with enduring mind,
Diving in his deep heart for sorrow's ease.

XXIX.

A REPLY.

" How canst thou ask to have long letters from me,
When thou art far away? My thoughts and hopes
And dreamings thou still read'st with love-learn'd eye,
And they change not; that no variety
May give relief to my heart-heavy words;
And thou wilt tire of sameness."—So the birds
Might to the lone Earth sing when spring is gone,
Summer and autumn too, and winter opes
His cold eyes o'er the world: but 'tis their voice,
Piping to her lorn ear at intervals,
That bids her in her lonely plight rejoice
And dream on future greetings. Do not doom me
To restless doubt; but let the dew which falls
From Love's full pen cheer my Life's floweret lone!

XXX.

THE EVE OF ABSENCE.

Thou sittest silent amid strangers, Dear!
And I am going far from thy fond heart:
Thy cheeks are pale, and in thine eyes a tear
Starts, and its orbed world is dim with sorrow;
For thou art musing on a blank to-morrow.
But, cheating distance, let us still be near
In waking thoughts and vivid dreams of love;
And from our heart's worn ark send memory's dove
In search of rest from passion's sorrow-flood!
In body, not in soul, we wholly part;
And still our thoughts shall be right spiritual food,
To feed the pining dotage which we bear
Craving within our spirits.—Yet I moan;
Leaving thee sad, 'mid joy; and in a crowd, alone.

XXXI.

THE PENCILLED LETTER.

" I AM not o'ermuch charm'd with this same dwelling:
How poor, to the rich memory of the past!
I have thy vow, that when night's shades are cast
Over the world, thy far heart shall be swelling
With thoughts of me and love. I need not tell
How, dreaming, or wide-waking, I shall be
For ever with thee. Ceaselessly I dwell
On the drear pangs of utter desolation
Which I must feel when thou art gone from me.
And, oh! I pant with fearful expectation
Of our next greeting. Dearest! love me still:
I know new objects must thy spirit fill;
But yet, I pray thee, do not love me less.
This write I where I dress.—Bless thee! for ever, bless!"

THE ANSWER.

1.

Here in my lone abode again I sit,
With a tired heart, for ever toward thee yearning;
And visions of thee, in all aspects, flit
Before my sleepy eyes, that cannot sleep,
Kept open by my troubled mind's discerning.
Through the long night sad vigils did I keep;
And spectres of thee, and imaginings,
Were in me and around me. I did weep,
To think on all thy love; and all the grief
Which must disturb thy spirit in its springs,
After our hurried parting, when relief
Of tears or sighs was by our state forbidden;
And our one heart was as a folded leaf
In which oracular characters are hidden.

2.

But, then; the thought—the deep, prophetic thought,
That in this being we should meet again,

Did still the turbulent sorrow of my soul ;
And my sweet hopes kiss'd thine—but had no fear ;
For a triumphant flag did passion rear,
That stream'd into the future, glory-fraught !
I cannot cease to love thee : though the chain
Of this world is around me, its controul
Is feeble ; for the powers of love and song
Wave a magician's wand above my spirit,
And sway me with a talisman divine
Which I resist not : others may inherit
My heart's wild perfume ; but the flower is thine.
This read where thou didst write.—All blessings round thee
throng !

XXXII.

THE TOKEN-FLOWERS.

" I HAVE been gazing on those eloquent flowers—
The love-named ' heart's-ease' and ' forget-me-not'—
Which thou didst give me in those last sweet hours
That beam'd quick life before our death of parting.
They are both wither'd !—That the first should die,
To my repining heart is nothing strange ;
For never heart's ease fell to passion's lot
In this woe-weary world, where chance and change
Still drug joy's purest cup with misery.
But my soul sighs, and to my eye is starting
A thoughtful tear, to think the last must perish :
Oh ! I would have it live until the hour
When thy remembrance, Dear ! I cease to cherish—
What an undying thing were then that sacred flower !"

XXXIII.

A MYSTERY'S SOLUTION.

1.

" I CANNOT tell you why; but ever when
I'm most depress'd in spirit, I still think
Incessantly of you."—I'll tell thee why:
When of affliction's cup our spirits drink,
By the sad chances of the world fill'd high,
They sink into the bosom's inmost cell,
And from the feeling there most spiritual
Draw solace, though great grief within it dwell—
As the bee honey from the poison-flower.
One object lurketh in the souls of men,
Which still they look to with eternal eye,
Outgazing death! and with an unseen power
It swayeth action; 'tis the all-in-all
That prompts the doings which men *Madness* call:

2.

And by this moved—when sorrow, or annoyance
Besets life's common path with weed and briar,
That all surrounding things seem void of joyance
And life a wretched clod 'twixt frost and fire—
Thou turn'st for refuge to the only feeling
Thou carriest with thee in all thoughts of heaven;
And love pervades thee, with a deep revealing
Of dews and flowers, and meadows green and even,
And gushing rivulets, and sunny vales,
Inlaid with waving shadows, and calm nooks,
And songs of birds and leaf-attuning gales;
All poetry of nature and of books,
Of passion-minglings and communings sweet—
And on a far-off shore all thy heart's billows beat!

XXXIV.

PRESENCE.

" To-day, continually—at least, in thought—
Have you been my companion"—O, that thought
Could conjure what is real from the air,
And place it, warm and living, in our arms!
Then had we clasp'd each other; and repair
Made to the shadows of the woods around,
And revell'd in the intermingling charms
Of Nature's outward, Love's internal glory!
Yet there's a spiritual presence—in a sound,
A bird, a flower, a leaf, poetic story—
Of those with whom we've joy'd in them and love
In the sweet past: there glows a memory
Richly round all things, when the sacred dove
Of Thought sits on the heart, brooding eternally.

XXXV.

THE IMPOSSIBILITY.

" Ere many years are o'er—when, it may be,
We shall be almost strangers to each other"—
I mark not what doth follow; for there flee
Thoughts toward my spirit which poor eyesight smother
And prostrate outward sense to that within.
We never can be strangers: in our being
Each unto each is an eternal presence,
That mingles with us in all grief, or pleasance,
Breathes in our worship, sins in all our sin,
Beats in our heart, and sees in all our seeing!
And what though death come, like a cloud, between us,
And in the dust of graves our warm veins lie?
This but concerns the veil which here doth screen us
From the soul-filling light of God's own eye.

XXXVI.

THE "AMEN."

"Though thereby I do lose what more I prize
Than all things else most dear to sense, or soul,
Your heart's engrossing love; yet do I pray
That you may brighten on Fame's starry way,
And reach in triumph that sky-templed goal
To which for ever turn poetic eyes!"—
'Amen! Amen!'—a fervent, loud 'Amen!'
Bursts from my lips, with all the wild sea's passion
When it leaps high to clasp the thunder-storm!
And even now, whilst from my trembling pen
My mind flows on my page, in fitful fashion,
I seem to live in death in some dim form,
Whose blood is even a voice! Nor art thou wrong'd;
For thus thy being is with mine prolong'd.

XXXVII.

FIDELITY.

Whene'er I play thee false, my distant lover!
And drink delight from other eyes than thine,
Thine eyes start in the air, more bright than wine,
And pour into my soul reproof divine;
And then in love-thoughts, like a lark in clover,
My hush'd heart sweetly broods; and I repent me
That e'er to do thee wrong I could content me.
Whene'er I play thee false, my distant beauty!
From other lips than thine sweet nectar pressing,
Between the ruby tempters to my treason,
And mine, the traitors, do thy lips ope, blessing
The air with balm; and back to their dear duty
Recal my senses and their absent reason;
And I am very faithful—for a season.

XXXVIII.

THE MORTAL MUSE.

O, THOU, my Inspiration! from afar
Lighting my fancy, as the sun the star—
Distance shades not thy glory from my sight;
But through the mediate air I drink thy light,
And with the beam of thy reflected love
Am kindled and instinct! My thought doth move,
In planetary state, through passion's sky,
Around the sun-like centre of thine eye;
And, subtle made by that refining fire,
Exhales in breath, which floateth o'er my lyre
And stirreth the sweet concord of its springs,
Till Poesy opes wide her rainbow-wings;
And, through an universe of smiles and tears,
Wafts to communion with the wild-voiced spheres!

XXXIX.

TO

"THE CONSTELLATED FLOWER, THAT NEVER SETS."

Thou lowly flower! be thou exalted ever;
Sphered in the eternal arch of poesy!
For thou art a memorial, failing never,
Of the heart's holiest throb in dreams gone by.
Here, where the accursed tread of men-machines,
Drill'd to the art of slaughter, beats thee down—
(And fit it is not that in martial scenes
Thou shouldst lift up thy love-presiding crown)
Here, where no eye but mine adores thy star;
No foot but mine to crush thy heart refuseth;
Thou to my spirit speak'st of meads afar,
Till with a weight of love my bosom museth;
And with my Lady dear I bless the scene
Where thy white constellations star the green.

XL.

LOVE AND POESY.

"I HAVE not poesy; but I have love."
Thou hast both poesy and love, dear Heart!
For Love is of himself a poesy.
By his creative power a world is wove
Of thoughts and dreams, that to his spectred eye
A presence like reality impart;
Making the joy he loves, by his sweet art!
And what can heavenly Poesy do more?
All is a vision which she doth adore:
Fine Poesy and Love are still the same;
Save that warm Love is happier, and perchance
May substance find whereon to feed his flame,
And purchase sigh with sigh and glance with glance;
But Poesy loves shadows, without place or name.

XLI.

TO

"THE PEARLED ARCTURI OF THE EARTH."

O, GRACE of meadows green and mossy banks!
Eternal Flower! still constant to the Year;
When April with bright hair his forehead pranks,
Or when his locks turn grey in winter drear.
Blest be the hour I taught my Lady's heart
To hold thy beauty in its inmost feeling;
To love thee better that thou humble art,
And op'st thine eye with such a sweet revealing
Of quiet joy! for now she cannot stray
Through field, or grove; or lane, by hedge-rows green;
But she must greet thy pink lips, by the way—
Thy white-ray'd cirques of gold, for ever seen!
And thus her thoughts to me must still be turn'd,
From whom the love she bears thy gem she learn'd.

XLII.

OF THE POEMS OF SHAKSPEARE.

What? tear away that poesy divine
Of Venus and her Boy—sweet purple flower!
On whom she doted with a love like thine
For him whose heart beats at that wondrous song?
Of gentle Lucrece and her cruel wrong?
The Passionate Pilgrim's tears?—a rainbow-shower!
And the fair Lover's eloquent Complaint?
As full of fine thought as a hive of honey,
When the sweet bees fulfil their labours sunny!
O, leave such outrage to the dismal saint;
To man and woman that in secret sin,
And fear earth more than heaven: but do not thou
Assume the hypocrite, and basely win
A crown of seeming for thy truth-fair brow!

XLIII.

TO ELECTRA.

As that Philosopher of regions cold,
Too idly dallying with the etherial fire
The Trans-Atlantic from its cloudy hold
Taught to unloose, did in its power expire;
The martyr of an infinite desire
To unveil secrets high; so I, approaching
Too nigh the electric force of beauteous eyes,
Suffer the penalty of that encroaching,
And in their fluid light my spirit dies!
Oh! fan it back to life with thy sweet sighs;
Or loose thy long locks o'er me, as the moon
Spreads her soft rays over a flower asleep;
That I may waken from this tranced swoon,
And into life again, rekindled, leap!

XLIV.

THE HEART-FAVOURITE.

As in the capitals of Scythian kings
Abode more sacred and distinguish'd grew
The nigher it approach'd the sovereign view,
So nearness to thy beauty honour brings.
The slave that dwells within thy gaze afar
Doth pride him on that distant preference;
And who thy vision quite forbidden are
Holds dark as reptiles in a forest dense.
Oh! then, to what advancement am I raised,
Who in the palace of thy heart abide!
And marvel none that, with a favourite's pride,
On outer suitors I in scorn have gazed:
Yet fear not I, as baser minions do,
Slander the love whence I my greatness drew.

XLV.

LOVE-WORSHIP.

When I do hear my Love's most holy name
Blasphemed by vulgar and degenerate lips,
My heart is moved with a pious shame
That words profane should heavenliest shrines eclipse:
Then burn I with a votary's indignation;
And, with the fervour of my faith elate,
Would force those ministers of desecration
With blood my deity propitiate!
Yet would a stream so foul pollute her altar,
Where love is sole-accepted sacrifice;
Therefore my hand refrains, my speech doth falter;
I leave them to the curse of their device:
Who worships spirit needs not war, indeed,
On dull idolaters, to prove his creed.

XLVI.

CONTENTMENT.

" If I dared write all I do feel and think,
You would be satisfied."—What is the chain
That binds thine eloquence to passion's brink ?
O, cast it in the flood ! It cannot sink
Upon that buoyant tide; but there may rain
Eternal freshness, from its floating pinions,
Over my thirsty heart and feverish brain.
Yet, words are but the fancy's airy minions,
Bearing no substance in their picturings vague;
And I with air could not be satisfied,
Which but contributes pestilence to plague:
But when lips' speech mute lips have ratified,
And our hearts' music is intensely blent,
I'll lay me on thy lap, and cry—*Content!*

XLVII.

THE MANDATE.

O, MY sweet spirit! to my sadness come;
Or, from the distant beauty of thy home,
Send me some comfort; for, indeed, my days
In the deep longing for immortal praise
Die mournfully: I tremble, sigh and weep;
And melancholy ghosts still haunt my sleep,
Of men whose tortures were high aspirations;
From which I wake to spectral contemplations
Of the dim future, and draw nothing thence
But unconvincing, shadowy conclusions;
Nor can the present firmer thoughts dispense;
And the dead time recedeth in delusions.
O, come! come sweetly; on my heart to lie,
Balming its depths with thy dear charity!

XLVIII.

THE TEAR.

THERE is a sweet salt in thy kisses, Dear!
That dwells upon the lips like ocean-foam
Dropp'd from the whirling airs: what wandering tear
Hath left the palace of its orbed home;
Straying from crystal, over wan carnation,
Unto thy rich mouth's curving almandine,
Where half its dew is minister'd to mine
In our fix'd greeting's balmy implication?
Be it the herald of a tempest-shower,
Enclouded in the heaven of thy heart;
Or but a summer-drop, which the warm power
Of love doth to the air of sighs impart;
Like a true Bacchant will I drink it up,
Keeping my mad lips glued upon the cup!

XLIX.

THE FROZEN HEART.

What frost o' the world hath thus congeal'd to ice
The once warm love-tide of my Lady's heart,
That now she stands upon decorum nice
And fences her true nature with false art?
Some jealous one hath lied into her ear,
Accusing me of treason and deceit;
And this her coldness is still-born of fear?
Or, haply, my best words sound not so sweet
As when my lips, by hers made eloquent,
Sigh'd May-morn love about her, dew'd with gladness;
For now I live with a less fond intent,
My life by death-thoughts being steep'd in sadness?
Yet do I think that, with one favouring minute,
I could unfrost that heart, and bathe my passion in it!

L.

THE DELUSION.

Can Love's eye be deceived? There's but one Sun
In Heaven; and he who when that Sun's away
Still sees the Sun, is sure of sense bereaved!
My Lady is afar: and as her own
There's no such face of beauty i' the world;
Yet beams it near me, glorious as a star
Triumphant on the forehead of the Dawn!
Is it delusion, on my false eye drawn?
Or, like a spirit, is she omnipresent,
Flattering the world with her ubiquity
Whose presence even in absence I inherit?
I will not speak: it is; and it is not!
Mine eyes would cheat my heart into a folly;
And what exists not, to create they seek.

LI.

LOVE'S WINTER.

The springtide and the budding and the dew
Of our sweet love soon past; but summerless
It went, and immatured; its buds, untrue,
Came not to flower or fruit of perfectness;
And the rich balm of its most vernal state
Hung frozen in a winter desolate:
So was its bursting freshness check'd and blighted;
And cold o'ercasts the sphere where we delighted
To prophesy of summer ecstasies,
Gathering our hopes from warm lips and fond eyes,
Clasp'd hands, and interchanged sympathies
That drew our hearts together. All is o'er!
To the Earth's frost come primaveral skies;
But to Love's winter spring returns no more.

LII.

BUD AND BLOSSOM.

My thoughts are with thee, Dear One!—Vale and hill
Are shaded into slumber; and the Night
Seems gather'd in itself—it is so still!
Darkness devours the clouds, in her broad flight
From east to west; and that most silent hour
Which so to Heaven the guilty Spirit bringeth
That from its depths an "Alleluia" springeth,
Now fills grey Time's old glass, and with its power
Lures me to love-dreams of thy babe and thee.
I see her smiling on thy cradle-knee:
Her lips from thy fond bosom just withdrawn;
And thine enamour'd eyes o'er her eyes bent
(A bud and blossom in one sweetness blent!)
Hailing thine own life in its second dawn.

LIII.

THE STARS OF SLEEP.

Her eyes have shone through all the blessed night,
Deep-dwelling in my love-infixed soul;
That death-blind Sleep became a thing of sight,
And bright flowers from the desert darkness stole.
And as in Heaven's midnight solitude,
When in her vapourous mantle Air reposeth,
One silver planet, with the sun imbued,
A joy-like light upon the gloom discloseth;
In the hush'd wilderness of clouded slumber,
Those eyes, into my brain's oblivion peering,
Unfolded visions which to name or number
Were to unveil all secrets that should lie
In the heart's Holy-of-Holies, not appearing
To the base conscience of one vulgar eye.

LIV.

HEART-REBELLION NEEDED AGAINST THE WORLD.

Hold up thy head, Sweet Friend! Be not cast down!
What is 't to us whether men smile, or frown?
Upon each other's life and love we've built
A regal tower, wherein our crown'd hearts dwell
Upon one throne, all unassailable
By the democracy of base Opinion!
Be not self-humbled, Love! Virtue and guilt
Are words misunderstood. The World's dominion
Is one stern tyranny o'er human hearts,
Which they must strive against; or ever lie
In dungeons of great grief, where petty arts
Of petty souls, whose grace is cruelty
Worse than their hate, shall with a thousand stings
Torture away sweet Life, and all the Love it brings!

LV.

THE TAINTED.

The contact of base minds and their discourse
Have tainted thy clear spirit, gentle Lady!
And Common Being, with its sluggish force,
Hath overgrown thy Purer Soul's existence;
As in the silence of a spring-bank shady
A bramble hides a wild-flower: and the distance
That ever lay between thee and the grossness
Of the vain world and its self-drawn moroseness,
Is lessening day by day, to my much sorrow.
Yet, from one thought do I that comfort borrow
Which holds me from despairing of thy soul:
Clouds of the world on thy heart's clearness fall;
But wilful memories thou canst not controul,
Of an untold delight, must keep thee spiritual.

LVI.

THE MISGIVING.

That such rich strains of powerful poesy,
Feeding, as feed they must, thy living sense
With sumptuous banquetings of memory,
Should not have call'd one word of feeling thence,
Of tongue, or pen, hath left me in amaze
At the inconstancy of fervent blood,
Which ebbs and flows like any moon-ruled flood,
And never runs full-channel for an hour!
Is it my sin, or others' flattering praise,
That hath divested of its urgent power
The Verse which once to drink and to devour
Thine eyes and heart were ever famishing?—
Well! I have other themes; and many a string
To tune thereto, dear Churl!—Love is an idle thing.

LVII.

REMINISCENCES.

1.

Thou art not here, although I talk to thee,
Save in thy mystic presence in my heart:
Thou art not here, as thou didst vow to be;
That cast I am on my creative art,
Thy beauty all about me to impart
And load the air with thy tongue's melody!
There is a mighty heaving of the Spring;
And birds and flowers and leaves are homage paying
To Nature, in her young-love conquering
Of the iced blood of the Old Winter, playing
Himself to death in her fresh, sunny arms!
But, in thine absence, these song-luring charms
Cannot my sight to any fixure bring:
Mine eyes see thee alone—in vain imagining.

2.

As from my brain emerging, thou art here!
O, Planet! leapt from out a winter-cloud
Which the winds strike and kill! how summer-dear
To my heart's long storm-shaken atmosphere
Is thy dew-balmy light! Now, Spring is proud!
And thee in her and her in thee I view
And hear, in all the heaven of sound and hue!
O, God! it is the trust and love within
That give the glory to thy handiwork!
Dear! the World lies when, garrulous of Sin,
Our lives from their best living it would irk:
With thee to love, my Faith's sweet Origin!
I worship God, and am a Spirit indeed;
Without thee, on the thorns of disbelief I bleed!

LVIII.

AN EXPOSITION.

How is it, in thine Absence, Dearest One!
That in so many features limn'd I see
Thy features' likeness; but their like in none
When thy sweet Presence is glad life to me?
'Tis thus why thus it is: When thou art vanish'd
From my love-dazed sight, the bright impression
Which there thy beauty makes, thence is not banish'd;
But still upon mine orbs holds throned session,
And upon others' faces soft-reflected
Invests them with a lurement not their own;
Making me covet that were else neglected
By Love which doth disloyalty disown!
But when thine aspect on mine eyes doth ride,
It shineth so, I'm blind to all beside.

LIX.

AN AGONY.

O, God! the agony of Memory!
O, sweetness of the Past! no more to be!
The same clear stream between the same green meads
Flows with the self-same voice! O, that clear mirror!
Into whose depths of glory, Heaven's reflex,
We look'd with weeping eyes, that did not weep;
But though our tears within their fountains deep
Were dam'd, our eyelids seem'd as sadly weeping.
All, all the same! save season's difference.
But where, and what is she? O, spectral terror!
That shows her of the Dead! O, pang intense!
O, weavings of the brain and heart complex!
O, Life! that only on its dead joy feeds!
O, God! if Death should be a dreaming Sleeping?

LX.

LOVE THAT CALCULATES.

Love is not love, that coldly calculates
The chances of the fire on which it feeds:
Whenever Passion reasons, it abates,
And grows a miser of its liberal deeds.
No niggard is a lover: she who swears
To be forbearing in her heart's sweet alms,
Dishonoureth the livery which she wears;
And breatheth a dull air, whose touch becalms
The spirit on the deep of its great yearning,
Or that part playeth which to Love's discerning
Is seeming, merely—to be full-forgiven,
Because that falsehood is of falsehood born;
And that the world hath on Love's forehead riven
His crown of Truth, with its vile hand of scorn!

LXI.

LOVE'S ADMIRATION.

Love's Admiration is not loud, but deep;
By all it speaks not, known; not all it speaketh:
To outward eye it doth nor smile nor weep;
To outward ear is dumb, nor once outbreaketh
In chorus with glad thousands clamouring
In joy's too ostentatious triumphing:
But, fathomless, within its own great heart,
Intense delight unutterably seeketh
Communion with its life-blood—smiles and tears
And gratulation and sublime acclaim
Felt, seen and heard!—a touch of ether-flame,
Poetic vision and high songs o' the spheres!
Love's Admiration is of Love a part;
And burns i' the sacred silence which endears.

LXII.

THE RIVALRY.

Ah! Sweet Creatrix of that World of Sound
That vibrates on my ever-listening ear,
And all my sense pervades with such profound
And self-infusing power, that every vein
And every nerve within my quivering frame
Seem in true chorus to repeat again,
Again, and yet again, the gushings clear,
Flowing and pulsing, of its harmony!
The heavenly might of thine enchanted fingers
Hath nowhere its true like, or rivalry;
Save on those lips of thine, when dewy flame,
Ascending from the heart, upon them lingers;
And, drawn into my soul with thy warm breath,
Melts all the heart of life to liquid death!

LXIII.

"THE CHORD-OF-THE-DOMINANT."

" ' O, DO !' and ' Will you not ?' and such sweet phrases,
So utter'd, strike a chord of my rapt soul,
Which, like the chord-o'-the-dominant, must be
At once resolved into firm repose;
Or else it pants and writhes through all the mazes
Of violated music painfully,
And no calm rest of consummation knows
In haven of contented harmony.
O, cunning of a master-hand control !—
' O, do !' and ' Will you not ?' make perfect tune
In me, of love thy breathing instrument;
The music of thy playing eloquent !
The stricken with the striker doth agree,
And all the intricate notes into each other swoon !"

LXIV.

A MOTHER TO HER NEW-BORN CHILD.

" Sweet cry ! as sacred as the blessed Hymn
Sung at Christ's birth by joyful Seraphim !
Exhausted nigh to death by that dread pain,
That voice salutes me to dear life again.
Ah, God !—my Child ! my first, my living Child !
I have been dreaming of a thing like thee
Ere since, a babe, upon the mountains wild,
I nursed my mimic babe upon my knee.
In girlhood I had visions of thee; love
Came to my riper youth, and still I clove
Unto thine image, born within my brain;
So like !—as even there thy germ had lain !—
My blood ! my voice ! my thought ! my dream achieved !—
O, till this double life, I have not lived !"

TEMPORALIA.

POEMS AND SONNETS.

I.

THE THREE GREAT DAYS.

TO THE FRENCH.

(WRITTEN IN AUGUST, 1830.)

1.

High Pharos of the Nations! Helice
Of those that navigate the unslumbering sea
Whose billows waft, through tempest and through terror,
Unto the golden shores of Liberty!
Your beacon and your star again are burning;
A guide to enterprise, a sign to error;
And those Saturnian times, anew returning,
Life's antique heart make strong and young
As Hebe's when from Air she sprung!
The Kingdoms gaze on ye, and pant for breath;
Grey Superstition trembles;
Old Tyranny is gloating on his death;
And the world's hope resembles
The dark sky's, when the free wind speaks aloud,
And constellations leap from every cloud!

2.

Ye have been hiving wisdom from the Past:
Your freedom's harvest old was overcast
By showers that deluged it with freedom's blood;
But from that gory feast this afterpast
Of holy joy and temperate revel cometh;
The plenty, not repletion, of whose food
Gives to pale Liberty the health that bloometh.
Your deeds unto the kindling Nations
Shall be, as solemn inspirations
Unto the Poet's and the Prophet's heart!
Ye have erased the stains
Ye and your sires did to her cause impart;
And now alone remains
The glory of her beauty undefiled,
To shame the dotards that too long reviled.

3.

Like strong Tirynthius, ye but ascended
The burning pile your madness had upblended—
And died on Liberty's Nemæan pillow!
To rise again, with vision more extended,
And commune closely with the powers of Heaven.
Now, now, the impulse to that thundering billow

Whose foam shall strike the Nations, hath been given!
'Tis salt upon the lips of Spain;
The Lusian drinks the glorious rain;
The Islands and the Ghost of buried Rome
Feel their locks wet withal:
Its echoes fill the everlasting dome;
And rock to rock doth call
Of living heart, with an awaken'd mirth—
'Tis ye have struck this spirit from the Earth!

4.

America and England, each to other,
Greet the regeneration of a brother;
For the Isle's King, as yours, is Freedom's guard!
And o'er the wave salute they one another:—
"We are our people's Chief, but not their Master;
"We rule in love, and love is our reward!" *
The cement of your strength is past disaster:
The freedom ye have dearly earn'd
Shall not again be overturn'd
By democrat's blood-quaffing violence:
If Anarchy arise,

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* ? ? ?—March, 1835.

Whose rage would blind the sacred innocence
That beams in Freedom's eyes,
With tears of gore, excite her infant strength
To stretch the writhed snake at innocuous length!

5.

O, holy Battailers in that contention,
Of Myriads to strike down the Few's pretension,
Which still hath been the birthdom of the world!
Ye have wrought bravely for the bright extension
Of each man's influence in his own behoof:
And Right's proud banner shall no more be furl'd
As heretofore; but underneath the roof
Of million-tinted air and heaven,
With suns and planets densely paven
Whose aspect prompteth Liberty's strong panting,
It shall wave high for ever!
Her seeds of amaranth Great Mind is planting,
With infinite endeavour,
Thick in the human heart's unfathom'd soil;
Whose blooms no solemn drones hereafter shall despoil!

6.

Your triumph in this Verse be high-recorded!
The tottering Despot's scabbard was unsworded,

To strike at Liberty's uplifted arm ;
And some few tyrant slaves their aid afforded
To wield the weapon that must crush the striker,
Turn'd on himself by her repelling charm.
He smote : ye rose indignantly ; and, liker
To storm and earthquake than to mortal
In rapid power, from her arm'd portal
Struck mail'd Oppression, with one gush of blood !
Who are the mighty now ?
The Bourbon stoops, a mendicant for food !
Upon his uncrown'd brow
Sit thoughts of curses from his desolate heirs ;
Whilst bitter scorn laughs loud in the supervolant airs.

7.

The thunder of your great deliverance roll'd
Over the hills of Fame : she heard and told,
The lightning of her spirit round her flashing,
Of feminine limbs and babes, as manhood bold,
Wearing the armour of your retribution ;
The base male recreants of the earth abashing :
And stripling boyhood framing the confusion
Of rage, just bursting wrong's old border,
Into sublime, consummate order :
Of cruelty and wrath and selfishness
To depths Avernal vanish'd ;

And perfect Freedom, folded in the tress
Of Love; and Memory banish'd
From a grieved Nation's heart, save that sufficient
To sceptre Wisdom on her throne omniscient.

8.

As sunbeams play above the heated shingle,
The rays of Freedom glowingly did tingle
Over your shores, with swift, tremescent motion,
And in a blaze of light electric mingle!
One mighty waste of wild and writhing foam—
An agony of tempest—was your ocean:
Until its sullen barriers, overcome,
Left it to flow in gentle state;
And none could deem a storm so late
Had cleft it to its undermost foundations!
Ye have enforced the world
Into a labyrinth of contemplations;
Which soon, unintertwirl'd,
Must open to the light of human glory;
When Earth shall gaze on Life from Freedom's promontory.

9.

Succeed to farms legitimate dullards may
As long as clods are clods; but not to sway

And privileges over nobler spirits :
That fashion from the world shall die away ;
And ye have set the signet to that fiat !
The lessons ye have taught old Time inherits,
To wean the Future from subjection's quiet.
As the wing'd wind unto the sea,
To Mind shall your example be ;
Urging on high the waters of her splendour,
Whose tempest Love assuages;
But to whose curbed force must slow surrender
The tyranny of ages
Enrock'd around them : Despots stand aghast
In their high towers, which shake in Freedom's thunderblast !

10.

A solemn voice is heard immurmurate
From the oppressed Lands Peninsulate,
Caught from the tempest of your exultation !
The heart of Europe beats in high debate
In the full senate-house of Liberty ;
And to your eloquent lip breathes confirmation
Which, pass'd some brooding years, shall burst on high !
The American hath kindled long
Pure fires upon her altars strong ;

The Asian and the Afric hear her pinions
Striking the air afar,
And view her deep eye fix'd on their dominions—
A clear, though distant, star!
That full orb from Life's World all darkness shall disperse;
Those gorgeous plumes enfold our Human Universe!

II.

FRANCE.

THE 27TH, 28TH AND 29TH OF JULY, 1830.

France, from intemperate waking, fell asleep;
And mortal demons did oppress her slumber
With chains, from which she could not disencumber
Her numb'd and feverish limbs: they still did keep
Their heavy hands upon her troubled heart;
And as she shrank beneath them, twisted tighter
The bands that fetter'd her gigantic members;
Till, shrieking, from her drunken trance she woke!
Howling, the demons of her slumber fled; she broke
Their iron chains like threads; the holy embers
Upon her freedom's hearth rekindled brighter,
And played again an unforgotten part.
Be taught, O, Kings! Millions before the One!
Time from great knowledge hath great wisdom won.

III.

"REFORM-BILL" HYMNS.

1.

THE "NEWSPAPER."

It goeth forth, an instrument of power,
  Ruling and ruled by Great Society;
Noting the human business of the hour,
  With retrospection far, and prophecy;
Showing the world the world, and to the tide
Of Time its own vast flowings—self-supplied!

A wondrous and a mighty Thing it is,
  Speaking to distant millions as to near;
Rousing all passions and all sympathies,
  And forcing the earth's space to disappear
By its connecting course o'er all the lands,
Which makes the globe's antipodes shake hands!

Before its all-detecting, all-proclaiming
  And all-truth-telling voice, the Tyrant's throne
And the bald Bigot's altar, heavenward flaming
  With fires derived from hell, quiver and groan;

For it is clothed in liberty and light,
And casts destroying sun-shafts through their night!

Hail it, ye stirring Millions! as your Saver
From the Old Law of Things, that kept ye under
The foot-tread of the Few—as the way-paver
To your redemption-goal! And, of its thunder
Ye who sit throned the Joves invisible,
Use the mighty weapon well!
Hide it not in cloudy sphere
Of pale apathy, or fear;
But, ever let its radiant bolts be hurl'd
Against the Giant Ills that still bestride the World!

2.

A SONG OF THE PEOPLE.

The Hoary Dotard, Aristocracy,
Shakes in his crumbling palace-halls; for, hark!
On the broad Ocean of Democracy
Floats Liberty, prepared to disembark
On her predestin'd strand,
This English land!

In glory, o'er a world of tribulation,
  She raiseth her bright banner—as the Sun
O'er clouds and storms ascendeth burningly—
And, with a loud and multitudinous voice,
The millions of the congregated Nation
  (Myriad-lipp'd; but its great hearts as one!)
    Rejoice!
They fear! The Few who on our lives have fed—
The Tramplers on the Many—turn in dread!
And we, the mighty People, to regain
Our stolen birthright have not wrought in vain—
  We live! we live, again!

  Still bloodless be the sword we draw,
  To make our lawful wills the law
O'er dull Convention, Tyranny and Wrong,
Made by the Ignorance of Ages strong!
No gory weapon will we deign to wield,
Drenching with brother-blood our brother's field;
Dungeons and chains, death-blocks and torturings
Shall vanish from the world with Slaves and Kings:
We fight to conquer and convert our Foes;
Not use them bloodily! From Freedom flows
  Nor human tears, nor human gore:
With spiritual weapons for things spiritual

The living Many battle, as of yore
Did here and there some solitary Sage,
The one soul-beacon of his mindless Age!
For Knowledge now on myriad wings
From the Press, self-plumed, springs
And floats around us all!
We have not striven in vain
Against the tyrant-chain!
They fear! The Few who on our lives have fed—
The Tramplers on the Many—turn in dread!
We live! we live, again!

3.

TO THE PEERS.

Some golden bubbles, in the unquiet air
(Creations of a Childish Fantasy!)
Floating, I saw: lo! bare arms muscular
Approach'd them; and two hands—like Destiny
Crushing old worlds—destroy'd them utterly.
Slight sun-hatch'd creatures, in the calmness veering
Which did precede the storm, as though their fans
Of down were eagle-pinions, nothing fearing

The assured coming of the hurricanes,
I saw, and pitied for their vain careering:
The mighty winds came on, and mightier storms,
And whirl'd into the dust their insect-forms.
Bubbles and butterflies of men!—Ye Peers!—
Make for yourselves a safety in your fears!

4.

TO THE COMMONS, AT THEIR SQUABBLES.

What is 't ye do, Dull Spiders! darkly weaving
The web of your poor passions in the corners
Of your old Chamber, for the vile deceiving
Of idle fools, making the wise your scorners;
When all your words should be as songs of day
From bees and birds, all-cheering and intense
With peaceful power and thrilling influence
Over the list'ning world? Unto the Mass
Who toil with head or hand, what boot the feuds
That furnish gabble to your heated moods,
When truth runs o'er with wine, and shows ye—liars!
We must have answer to our great desires
For Social Progress; or we force the way,
And o'er ye, as a mighty whirlwind, pass!

5.

TO THE HIERARCHY.

Thou hast not built thy house upon the rock
Of Christ and his Good-Tidings, thou proud Thing,
Self-baptized with the name of " Hierarchy" !
But on the sand of this world's vanishing ;
Wherefore, it shall not brave the coming shock
Of Truth and Knowledge, in their flowings high
Up the vast banks of Time ; but, undermined,
Must shake, and great shall be the fall thereof.
Thy title is usurp'd, swollen Hierarchy !
" Chief of the Sacred" art thou not ; for, know
That not with Mammon and his rust, below,
Abideth Sacredness, whose mansion-roof
Archeth the Universe !—O, Base-of-Mind !
Thou in the Church of Christ hast dug a gluttonous stye.

6.

TO MY COUNTRY.

England ! that in thy confidence of power
Dost lie like guarded sleep—keep wide thine eyes !

Time on his grey wing bears a whirlwind hour,
That shall make chaff of all thy vanities:
But of that scattering, whether smiles or sighs
Shall be the issue, doth depend on thee—
Awake, old Country! from thine apathy;
And, gentle Mother! make thine Offspring blest
With more of equal plenty and sweet rest
Than is their dowry now, that they may feel
A filial heart-beat for their Parent's weal:
Let not a few wax gross with luxury,
Whilst thousands famish on one scanty meal—
Old Parent, wake! and hear thy Children's cry.

IV.

THE BIRD AND CHILD.

1.

A Lady with an eye most mild
And lips as beautiful as closing flowers
Was the young mother of a child
Whose prattle made the pastime of her hours.

2.

She in a cottage dwelt, whose thatch
Was oft the perch of a melodious bird,
Which seem'd that infant's glee to watch,
And piped sweet songs whene'er its voice was heard.

3.

Death touch'd the child, that it was dying,
And by it the pale mother moaning lay ;
And the bird ever had been flying
Around the thatch, but voiceless all the day.

4.

And when the gentle infant died,
Ere scarce the breath from its blue lips was gone,
The bird trill'd one brief song in pride—
Flew far, and never to return was known.

5.

The mother sorrow'd, and went mad—
And often in her phrensy this would say :—
" It is the bird that makes me sad,
" For with my sweet child's soul it flew away."

V.

A SONG.

1.

A LADY put to sea,
Nor thought of wind and tide;
But soon dismay'd was she—
And, "bear me back!" she cried.

2.

Another (or the same)
Took boat in a balloon;
But when to a cloud she came,
Must needs with terror swoon.

3.

And whether these fair voyagers
Arrived at worlds unknown;
Or got back safe to land, the dears!
I cannot tell, I own.

4.

But 'tis most like they perish'd
In the dread depths which they braved,
With thoughts for all they cherish'd,
Or would—had they been saved.

5.

O, Ladies! never trust
To water, or to air;
Where swim, or sink, ye must,
And go—the gods know where!

VI.

CALVUS.*

Bald Mortal! thou dost ape the Skeleton
That satirizes man and all his doings,
From every open'd grave; and shouldst seem one,
But for the glow-worm which is in thine eyes,
And certain airs that from thy lips arise.
Why, now to see thee at thine amorous cooings,

---

* The above Sonnet having been put into the hands of Mr. Leigh Hunt, at the period of his editorship of "*The Tatler*" (a journal which conferred a new grace upon its adopted name) he did it the honour to accompany it in that publication with the following jocular (?) "Answer," under the appropriate signature of "Calviultor":—

> "I've got my wig:—and now, thou rash Hirsutus,
> Crinitus, Whiskerandos, Ogre, Bear,
> Or whatsoever title please thine hair,
> Why vex the bald? Why loveless thus repute us?
> Sweet Shakspeare, *omni nectare imbutus*,
> Was bald; and he, the wise beyond compare,
> Socrates, teacher of the young and fair;
> And Cæsar, victim of a *natural* Brutus!
> Fresh is the bald man's head; for love so apt,
> That England's gallants, in her wittiest time,
> In voluntary baldness, velvet-capp'd,
> Through reams of letters urged their amorous rhyme:
> Then issued forth, peruked; and o'er their shoulders
> From ev'ry curl shook loves at all the fair beholders."

Or gravely preaching Immortality,
To which thy living death's-head gives the lie,
Would make the Shadow that all Life receiveth
Shake his dim sides with horrible derision.
Tell us, old Calvus! what about thee cleaveth,
To make distinction still between the vision
Of a death's-head and thine? Get thee false hair,
For thy sole privilege to upper air!

VII.

TO A MALIGNANT PERSON.

Poor rogue! I pity thee; but do not blame:
The spirit which is in us must have scope;
The toad must spit its venom—thou the same!
The hangman were a jest without his rope;
And thou without thy spleen were a disdain
To the recoiling world. I should as soon,
Having my reason clear, vent angry thought
On flies, for stinging in the summer-noon,
Flesh vexing with the pettiness of pain;
On worms, for living in the dirt and crawling;
On swine, for wallowing in the mire; on aught
Most foul of all things filthy, for appalling
The delicate nostril's sense, as blame on thee,
For glutting thy soul's life—thy deep malignity!

VIII.

THE PHAETONS OF KNOWLEDGE.

Still, still they prate! and common-place opinion
Utter on themes abstruse, whose comprehension
Hath long defied the mightiest dominion
Of the great minds of Earth, to whose dimension
Theirs are as bats to eagles!—Get ye home!
Search all the lore o' the past; and then, walk forth,
And air your damp wits by the Ocean-foam!
Study from east to west, from south to north,
And tell us to what end your labours come!
Phaetons of Knowledge! ye the reins essay
As if ye were indeed fit charioteers
To guide her wheels of glory through the spheres!
Refrain!—Eat, love, and die! or sport, or pray!
But with your shadows pave not Thought's bright way!

IX.

"PUBLISHING."

O, DULL mechanic means!—the only means—
Since Minstrel-harp and chant have pass'd away,
And we are fall'n on other modes and scenes—
By which to current make the Poet's lay!
O, that the godly human utterance
Of centred thought and interchanged feeling
Might the great Music of the Spheres enhance;
And, in the Vast of Space for ever pealing,
Go sounding onward through the Universe!
For, then; though deaf as now the Mortal Millions
To all the mystic harmonies of Verse;
The Stars and Birds, in their serene pavilions,
And all sweet things that heavenly music make,
Would listen—for their Fellow-Singers' sake!

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